THRILLING Love

...OV.
...5¢

THRILLING
...UBLICATION

Love WEARS A MASK
By SHIRLEY MANNERS

TAKE ME OR LEAVE ME
By EDWARD CHURCHILL

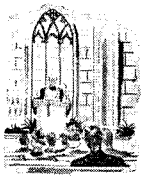
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Find out why the DEAF call *Beltone* a Miracle

ACCEPTED COUNCIL ON PHYSICAL MEDICINE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

. . . and One Tiny Unit is all you wear

You'd call this new Beltone Mono-Pac Hearing Aid a miracle, too, if you had been wearing a clumsy battery pack with entangling wires, and then suddenly found the new Electronic Beltone. It's One-Unit . . . so small you can hide it with your hand—so light you forget you are wearing it—so thin it is lost from sight . . . so powerful and efficient, you bless the day you learned about it. No wonder more people hear with Beltones than any other one-unit hearing aid!



Go to church again—with Beltone. Enjoy inspiring sermons without strain.

Hear the voices and laughter of those you love — Live Again with Beltone.

Send Coupon for FREE Book on overcoming deafness

BELTONE HEARING AID CO.

1450 W. 19th St., Dept. TF-11, Chicago 8, Ill.

Valuable Booklet FREE!

Beltone Hearing Aid Co.

1450 W. 19th St., Dept. TF-11, Chicago 8, Illinois

Please send me FREE Booklet about Deafness and what can be done to overcome it.

Name_____

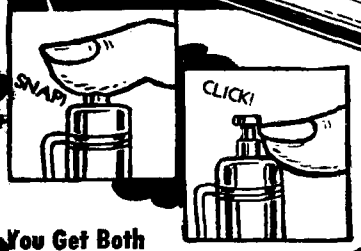
Address _____

Town_____ Zone_____ State _____

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

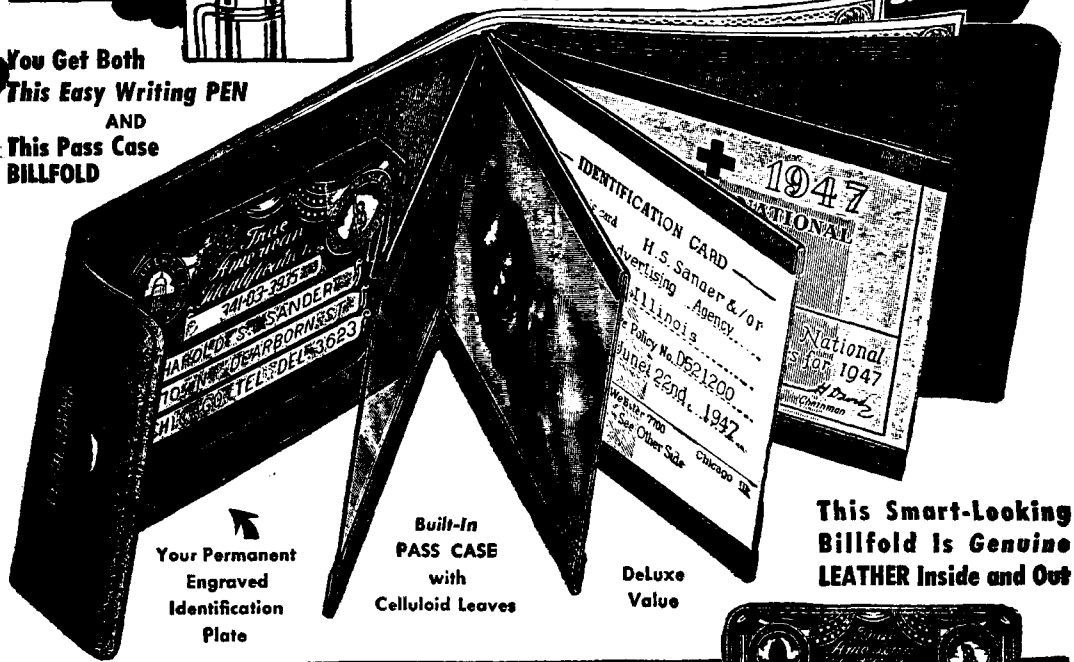
The Greatest BALL-POINT PEN and BILLFOLD BARGAIN in America!

You Get them BOTH for Only $1.98 PEN and BILLFOLD



Retractable Point at a Flick of the Button

You Get Both
This Easy Writing PEN
AND
This Pass Case BILLFOLD



Your Permanent Engraved Identification Plate

Built-In PASS CASE with Celluloid Leaves

DeLuxe Value

This Smart-Looking Billfold Is *Genuine* LEATHER Inside and Out

You Also Receive This Three Color Social Security Plate
ENGRAVED with YOUR NAME, ADDRESS and SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

You SEND NO MONEY To Receive This Marvelous TRIPLE VALUE!

• Here without a doubt is the greatest merchandise bargain you'll be likely to see for years to come. Only our tremendous purchasing power and large volume "direct-to-you" method of distribution makes such a value possible. Shop around and see for yourself. Where else today can you get both an all-metal Ball Point Pen with a retractable point plus a genuine leather Billfold with built-in pass case and your engraved Three Color Social Security Plate—all for only $1.98. This type of Pen alone has been selling for more than we ask for the Pen AND the Billfold on this offer.

• When you see this Pen and Billfold and examine their many outstanding features, you'll agree that we are giving you a value you won't be able to duplicate for a long time. Don't delay taking advantage of this big money-saving offer. These pens and billfolds are sure to sell out fast so it will be first come, first served. There's no risk. Your satisfaction is positively guaranteed.

Sensational Features!

THE PEN

- Push button . . . it writes! Click button . . . it retracts! Safe! Can't leak!
- Guaranteed to write up to 2 years without refilling.
- Dries as it writes. No smearing, no scratching. 6 to 8 clear carbons.

THE BILLFOLD

- 4 pocket built-in Pass Case, also celluloid window in front for Social Security Plate.
- Spacious currency compartment in back opens all the way.
- Button snap fastener. Easy to open and close. Holds securely.

NO MONEY! NO DEPOSIT! *Just Mail This Coupon!*

ILLINOIS MERCHANDISE MART, Dept. 2600-A
1227 Loyola Ave., Chicago 26, Ill.

☐ Please rush me the Retractable Ball Point Pen and Pass Case Billfold with engraved 3-Color Social Security Plate. On arrival I will pay postman only $1.98 plus Federal Tax and a few cents postage and C.O.D. charges. If I am not positively thrilled and delighted in every way I can return within 10 days for full refund.

MY FULL NAME.....
(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

ADDRESS .....

CITY .....STATE .....

To save shipping charges I am enclosing • Social Security No.....
[ ] in advance $1.98 plus 20c Federal Excise Tax (total $2.18).
[ ] Please ship my order all postage charges prepaid.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thrilling LOVE

VOL. LXIII, No. 3 A THRILLING PUBLICATION November, 1947

TWO COMPLETE NOVELETS

LOVE WEARS A MASK.....*Shirley Manners* 22
Adventure beckons to Frances Brown—and before she knows it, she is swept into a glamorous impersonation that leads to love's threshold!

TAKE ME OR LEAVE ME.....*Edward Churchill* 66
When Lela Main unexpectedly enters the juke-box business, her heart suddenly switches on an appealing and irresistible melody of love!

SHORT STORIES

TURN A NEW LEAF.....*Mona Farnsworth* 11
Enid Cronin and Hank Barton were lovey dovies—over the air waves

CLEAVAGE.....*Lillian Kay Morningstar* 39
Sharon Rice was afraid to let the breath of romance enter her heart

FROM NOW ON.....*Ruth Brown* 46
Debutante Kee Barlowe learns the rhythm of life on an isolated ranch

FAREWELL TO LOVE.....*Mary Arline Harte* 56
Kate saw all her dreams coming true—except the one that meant most

THE GIRL FOR CHIP.....*Virginia Gale* 89
Sally chooses a hazardous way of proving to a man that he adores her

FEATURES

WHAT YOUR STARS REVEAL.....*Victoria Gray* 6

LISTEN, GIRLS!.....*The Editor* 84

THE FRIENDLY SET.....*Mrs. Elizabeth Elder* 98

THE CHARM COLUMN.....*Answers to Questions* 113

Published monthly by Standard Magazines, Inc., 10 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y. Copyright, 1947, by Standard Magazines, Inc. N. L. Pines, President. Yearly, $1.80; single copies, $.15. Foreign postage extra. Entered as second-class matter in the Post Office at New York, N. Y., on September 17, 1931, under Act of March 3, 1879. Names of characters used in stories and semi-fiction articles are fictitious. If the name of any living person or existing institution is used, it is a coincidence. Manuscripts must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes, and are submitted at the author's risk. In corresponding with this publication, please include your local zone number, if any.

PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KIT 1 (left) I send you Soldering Equipment and Radio Parts; show you how to do Radio Soldering; how to mount and connect Radio parts; give you practical experience.

KIT 2 (left) Early in my course I show you how to build this N. R. I. Tester with parts I send. It soon helps you fix neighborhood Radios and earn EXTRA money in spare time.

VETERANS

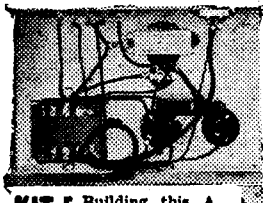
You can get this training in your own home under G.I. Bill. Mail coupon for full details.

Be a RADIO Technician

Learn by PRACTICING in Spare Time

with BIG KITS of RADIO PARTS I send you

KIT 3 You get parts to build Radio Circuits; then test them; see how they work; learn how to design special circuits; how to locate and repair circuit defects.



KIT 4 You get parts to build this Vacuum Tube Power Pack; make changes which give you experience with packs of many kinds; learn to correct power pack troubles.

KIT 5 Building this A. M. Signal Generator gives you more valuable experience. It provides amplitude-modulated signals for many tests and experiments.

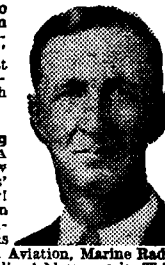
KIT 6 You build this Superheterodyne Receiver which brings in local and distant stations—and gives you more experience to help you win success in Radio.

My Course Includes Training in

TELEVISION • ELECTRONICS

FREQUENCY MODULATION

Do you want a good-pay job in the fast-growing Radio Industry—or your own Radio Shop? Mail the Coupon for a Sample Lesson and my 64-page book, "How to Be a Success in RADIO—Television, Electronics," both FREE. See how I will train you at home—how you get practical Radio experience building, testing Radio circuits with BIG KITS OF PARTS I send!



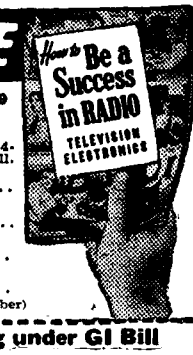
Many Beginners Soon Make Extra Money in Spare Time While Learning

The day you enroll I start sending EXTRA MONEY manuals that show you how to make EXTRA money fixing neighbors' Radios in spare time while still learning! It's probably easier to get started now than ever before, because the Radio Repair Business is booming. Trained Radio Technicians also find profitable opportunities in Police, Aviation, Marine Radio, Broadcasting, Radio Manufacturing, Public Address work. Think of even greater opportunities as Television, FM, and Electronic devices become available to the public! Send for FREE books now!

Find Out What NRI Can Do For You

Mail Coupon for Sample Lesson and my FREE 64-page book. Read the details about my Course; letters from men I trained; see how quickly, easily you can get started. No obligation! Just MAIL COUPON NOW in envelope or paste on penny postal. **J. E. SMITH, President, Dept. 7M09, National Radio Institute,** *Pioneer Home Study Radio School,* **Washington 9, D. C.**

Sample Lesson 64 Page Book **FREE**



Mr. J. E. SMITH, President, Dept. 7M09
National Radio Institute,
Washington 9, D. C.

Mail me FREE, Sample Lesson and 64-page book. (No salesman will call. Please write plainly.)

Age.....

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State..
(Please include Post Office zone number)

Approved for Training under GI Bill

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EVERYTHING can take on a special aura of fascination and glamour during the early part of October while the Sun and Venus are close to Neptune, the cosmic symbol of elusive charm.

However, you need to be careful not to be caught in the web of illusion since it would be easy to be enticed by the spurious as well as the romantic. Don't fling away an enduring friendship for the fleeting fascination of a new and untried acquaintance.

Toward the latter part of the month, after these configurations are concluded, reality will return. As often happens when the pendulum swings from one extreme to the other, there is danger of becoming too skeptical about the good intentions of even your most devoted friends. This suspicion is likely to occur as the result of the inharmonious vibrations that will be generated by the square aspects between the Sun and Saturn, the cosmic symbol of restraint.

Since Saturn and Pluto are in the Sign Leo which rules love and social pleasures, don't indulge in an excessive amount of gaiety. The shadows cast by these Planets in this part of the Zodiac cause an ever-changing tempo in the social scene.

Have a good time but hold on to your sense of values, regardless of temporary allurements. Allow things to happen of their own accord, particularly regarding the wish to travel, now that Uranus is in retrograde motion through the Sign Gemini which rules transportation. Any type of journey can be delayed as the result of this influence, so be prepared for any contingency when you are on a trip.

Similar in Temperament

GERTRUDE G. L. writes: I was born March 7, 1914. I am interested in a man born March 12, 1912. We want to get married, but I wonder how things will turn out for us.

What your horoscopes reveal: Each of you was born when the Sun was in the sign of Pisces which rules supersensory perceptions. Therefore you are both so similar in temperament that when something occurs to which one reacts with sensitive tension, the other is affected in the same way.

That is why astrologers believe that it is better for divergent vibratory influences to exist in the birth charts of husband and wife. Are you sure that you would be happy with a husband who has a disposition that is similar to your own?

Mother and Son

MRS. JANICE R. T. writes: Why is it that there have been such long interludes of separation between my son and me? Even when he was a child he was away for months at boarding school. I was born February 16, 1895. He was born November 1, 1919.

What your horoscopes reveal: At your birth the Sun was in the sign Aquarius, in wide square aspect with Uranus in the Sign Scorpio. In your son's horoscope the Sun is in exact conjunction with Uranus in your birth chart.

This combination of aspects causes separations. Fortunately there are influences in both horoscopes which mitigate against to a considerable degree. Therefore, although there are long intervals when you do not see each other, nevertheless when you do get together the sense of unity is strong.

In Love at Fifteen

MRS. HARRIET W. D. writes: My daughter Rita is only fifteen, but she is in love with a young man who wants to marry her. What

(Continued on page 8)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IMAGINE THEIR JOY

WHEN THEY FOUND THEY COULD PLAY

This easy as A.B.C. way!

LEARNED QUICKLY AT HOME

"I didn't dream I could actually learn to play without a teacher. Now, when I play for people they hardly believe that I learned to play so well in so short a time."
*H. C. S., Calif.

INVESTMENT PAID BACK A THOUSAND FOLD

"Anyone with musical ability should make good with your course. My little investment paid back a thousand fold. I have been playing for 4 years now. Today I play in one of our top bands."
*J.M., San Juan, P.R.

PLAYS ON RADIO

"As a proud student I can't keep from telling you that as a result of my course I have a good position playing from &THS, Hot Springs, Ark., every morning."
*J. S., Okla.

PLAYS AT DANCES

"I have completed your course and your lessons have been most satisfactory. I can play all of the popular songs. I have also earned money playing at dances."
*E. N. J., New York.

INVITED TO PARTIES

"I enjoyed taking this course and I get a lot of pleasure out of it. I have made much progress and have many invitations to play at parties. I owe you much for making this possible."
*K.U., N.Y.

Thousands Have Learned to Play Quickly, Easily At Home

WHAT instrument would you like to play? We'll show you how you can learn to play it—quickly, easily, in spare time at home for only a FEW CENTS A DAY! Never mind if you don't know one note of music from another—don't worry about our "special talent."

The truth of the matter is that thousands now play who never thought they could! Yes, men and women everywhere are enjoying the thrilling satisfaction of playing the piano, violin, guitar, saxophone or other favorite instrument. Some of them are playing in orchestras and over the radio; others are teaching music, making money in spare or full time. And thousands are playing for their own enjoyment and the entertainment of their friends.

It all came about when they wrote to the U. S. School of Music for the Free Booklet that shows you how EASY it is to learn music at home this modern way. No tedious scales, no tiresome exercises. You learn to play by playing—start right in almost at once with the melody of a simple tune! It takes only a few minutes a day and the cost is trifling; you save the expense of a private teacher. Does it sound too good to be true? Mail the coupon and get the FREE PROOF! (Our forty-ninth year — Est. 1898.) U. S. School of Music, 29411 Brunswick Bldg., New York 10, N. Y.

NOTICE

Please don't confuse our method with any systems claiming to teach "without music" or "by ear". We teach you easily and quickly to play real music, any music, by standard notes . . . not by any trick or number system.

SEND TODAY ➡ FOR COMPLETE DETAILS

● You'll open your eyes when you find how quickly and easily you can learn to play your favorite instrument. Don't doubt; don't hesitate. Send for the fascinating illustrated booklet that answers all your questions; let the free Print and Picture Sample show you how this method actually works. If interested, mail the coupon NOW.

**Actual pupils' names on request. Pictures by professional models.*

FREE! Print and Picture Sample

U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC
29411 Brunswick Bldg., New York 10, N. Y.

I am interested in music study, particularly in the instrument checked below. Please send me your free illustrated booklet, "How to Learn Music at Home."

Piano	Saxophone	Modern Elementary Harmony
Guitar	Trumpet, Cornet	Clarinet
Hawaiian Guitar	Reed Organ	Practical Finger Control
Violin	Tenor Banjo	Other Instrument
Piano Accordion	Mandolin	

Have you Instrument? .....

Name .....
(Please Print)

Address .....

City ..... State .....

NOTE: If you are under 16 years parent must sign coupon.

Save 2c—Stick coupon on penny postcard.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MEDICO
FILTERED
SMOKING

Frank Medico pipes have the replaceable filter that
- absorbs juices
- collects flakes and slugs
- reduces tongue bite

Only these patented filters have the 66 baffles that whirl smoke cleaner and cooler into your mouth. Replace filter when discolored.

Frank Medico V.F.Q. (*Very Fine Quality*) Bowls of rich-grained beauty. Wide variety of shapes. With 10 filters. $2

Frank Medico Standard Quality, still . . $1

S. M. FRANK & CO., INC. NEW YORK 22

INVENTORS

Learn how to protect your invention. Secure "Patent Guide" together with "Record of Invention" form—without obligation.

CLARENCE A. O'BRIEN & HARVEY JACOBSON
Registered Patent Attorneys
78-K District National Bldg. Washington 5, D. C.

SHORTHAND in 6 Weeks at Home

Famous Speedwriting system. No signs or symbols; uses ABC's. Easy to learn; easy to write and transcribe. Fast preparation for a job. Surprisingly low cost. 100,000 taught by mail. Used in leading offices and Civil Service. Write for free booklet to: Speedwriting, Dept. 9011-7, 55 W. 42 St., N. Y. 18, N. Y.

WHAT YOUR STARS REVEAL

(Continued from page 6)

shall I do? She was born January 25, 1932. He was born April 8, 1928.

What their horoscopes reveal: Although she is too young to settle down to the life of a married woman, the probability is that you will have to let your daughter do what she likes because she can be very determined when she makes up her mind.

The reason for her strong will power is that at her birth the Sun and Mars were conjoined in the Fixed Air Sign Aquarius, in opposition to the Moon in the Fixed Fire Sign Leo.

The Sign Aquarius rules freedom, and the Sign Leo rules romance. Therefore she has her own ideas about love.

The young man was born when the Sun was in the Fire Sign Aries, in sextile aspect with her Sun Sign. This constitutes an exceedingly favorable influence for friendship. However, Neptune in his birth chart conjoins her Moon in the Sign Leo, signifying a certain amount of illusion on her part regarding his emotional response to her ardor.

After she is a bit older she will see things differently. So try to be as patient with her as possible. As a matter of fact, there is a good deal of compatibility between your daughter and the young man, so do not discourage her altogether. Ask her to wait another year or so, until after Saturn, the cosmic symbol of delay, moves out of her solar Seventh House which rules marriage. By that time both you and she will attain a more settled viewpoint of the romance.

An Employment Problem

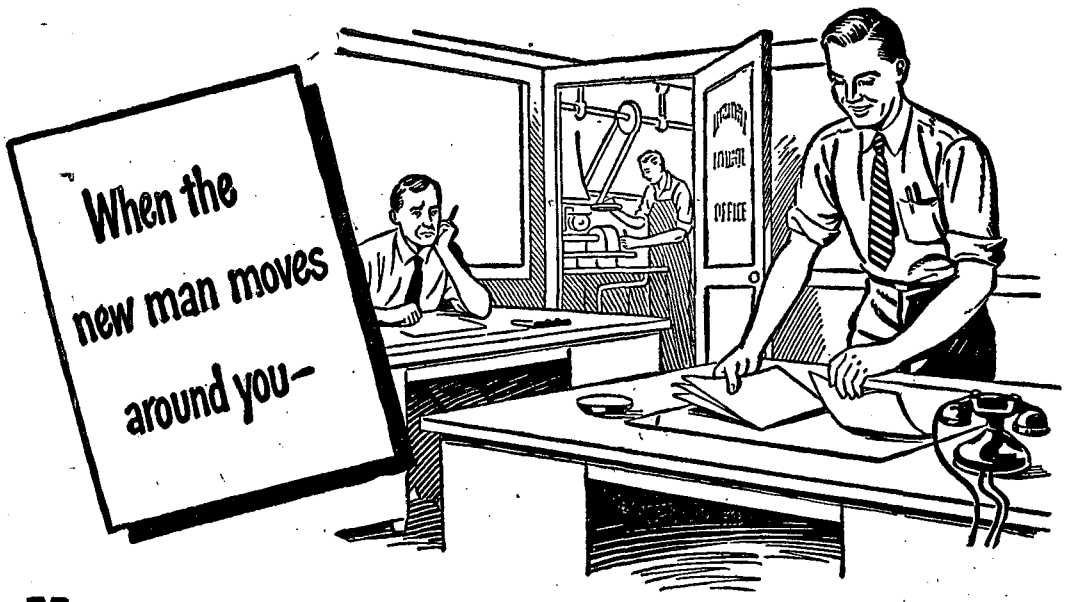
MAX G. V. writes: What are my chances for employment? All the men in our factory were laid off about six weeks ago because we were short of raw material. Some have been called back, but I am still idle. What other type of work can I do during this slack time?

I was born July 11, 1915.

What your horoscope reveals: A very powerful stellium was formed at the time of your birth by the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Saturn, and Neptune in the Sign Cancer which rules catering. Therefore outstanding success is indicated through any

(Continued on page 106)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



You remember the day Charlie Fisher started in Factory Office. You remember his early weeks when *you* "broke him in." Today he's clearing off the old desk and moving into a job ahead of yours. You've been ten years longer with the company and you can't understand it.

Do some realistic checking up and you'll find that Fisher has been *training* himself for the demands and responsibilities of larger positions. It isn't too late for *you* to do the same by taking an I. C. S. Shop Practice Course.

Thousands of successful Americans have acquired their all-important Shop Practice training from the world-famous International Correspondence Schools. The man who has moved around you quite possibly sent in this coupon once. *And it wouldn't be surprising if the man who employs you both is a former I. C. S. student.* Many employers are.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

ICS

BOX 3967-K, SCRANTON 9, PENNA.

Without cost or obligation, please send me full particulars about the course BEFORE which I have marked X:

Air Conditioning and Plumbing Courses
- ☐ Air Conditioning
- ☐ Heating ☐ Plumbing
- ☐ Refrigeration ☐ Steam Fitting

Chemistry Courses
- ☐ Chemical Engineering
- ☐ Chemistry, Analytical
- ☐ Chemistry, Industrial
- ☐ Chemistry, Mfg. Iron & Steel
- ☐ Petroleum Refining ☐ Plastics
- ☐ Pulp and Paper Making

Civil Engineering, Architectural and Mining Courses
- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Architectural Drafting
- ☐ Bridge and Building Foreman
- ☐ Building Estimating
- ☐ Civil Engineering
- ☐ Coal Mining
- ☐ Contracting and Building
- ☐ Highway Engineering
- ☐ Lumber Dealer
- ☐ Reading Structural Blueprints
- ☐ Sanitary Engineering
- ☐ Structural Drafting
- ☐ Structural Engineering
- ☐ Surveying and Mapping

Communications Courses
- ☐ Electronics
- ☐ Practical Telephony
- ☐ Radio, General
- ☐ Radio Operating
- ☐ Radio Servicing
- ☐ Telegraph Engineering

Electrical Courses
- ☐ Electrical Drafting
- ☐ Electrical Engineering
- ☐ Electric Light and Power
- ☐ Lighting Technician
- ☐ Practical Electrician

Internal Combustion Engines Courses
- ☐ Auto Technician ☐ Aviation
- ☐ Diesel-Electric
- ☐ Diesel Engines ☐ Gas Engines

Mechanical Courses
- ☐ Aeronautical Engineer's, Jr.
- ☐ Aircraft Drafting
- ☐ Flight Engineer
- ☐ Forging ☐ Foundry Work
- ☐ Heat Treatment of Metals
- ☐ Industrial Engineering
- ☐ Industrial Metallurgy
- ☐ Machine Shop
- ☐ Mechanical Drafting
- ☐ Mechanical Engineering
- ☐ Mold-Loft Work
- ☐ Patternmaking—Wood, Metal
- ☐ Reading Shop Blueprints
- ☐ Sheet-Metal Drafting
- ☐ Sheet-Metal Worker
- ☐ Ship Drafting ☐ Ship Fitting
- ☐ Tool Designing
- ☐ Toolmaking
- ☐ Welding—Gas and Electric

Railroad Courses
- ☐ Air Brake ☐ Car Inspector
- ☐ Diesel Locomotive
- ☐ Locomotive Engineer
- ☐ Locomotive Fireman
- ☐ Railroad Section Foreman

Steam Engineering Courses
- ☐ Boilermaking
- ☐ Combustion Engineering
- ☐ Engine Running
- ☐ Marine Engineering
- ☐ Steam Electric ☐ Steam Engines

Textile Courses
- ☐ Cotton Manufacturing
- ☐ Rayon Weaving
- ☐ Textile Designing
- ☐ Woolen Manufacturing

Business and Academic Courses
- ☐ Accounting ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Arithmetic ☐ Bookkeeping
- ☐ Business Administration
- ☐ Business Correspondence
- ☐ Certified Public Accounting
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Commercial Art
- ☐ Cost Accounting
- ☐ Federal Tax
- ☐ First Year College
- ☐ Foremanship ☐ French
- ☐ Good English ☐ High School
- ☐ Higher Mathematics
- ☐ Motor Traffic ☐ Postal Service
- ☐ Salesmanship ☐ Secretarial
- ☐ Sign Lettering
- ☐ Spanish ☐ Stenography
- ☐ Traffic Management

Name_____ Home Address_____

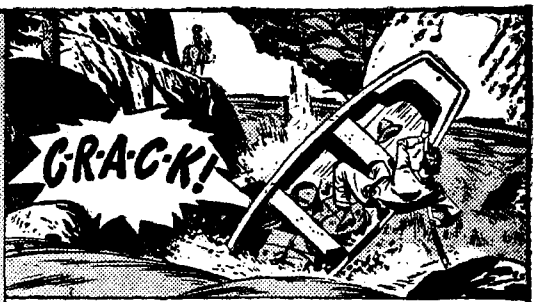
City_____ State_____

Age_____ Present Position_____ Working Hours_____ A.M. to_____ P.M.

Special tuition rates to members of the Armed Forces.
Canadian residents send coupon to International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LUCK WAS WITH TOM WHEN...



ON VACATION, TOM MAHONEY IS SHOOTING THE LAST AND MOST DANGEROUS RAPIDS IN HIS LONG TR— THROUGH MAD CANYON. WHEN • • •

YOUR FACE LOOKS WELL GROOMED AND FEELS SWELL AFTER A SMOOTH, REFRESHING THIN GILLETTE SHAVE. MEN, THIS BLADE IS THE KEENEST AND LONGEST LASTING LOW-PRICED BLADE YOU EVER TRIED. THEN, TOO, IT FITS YOUR GILLETTE RAZOR ACCURATELY AND THUS PROTECTS YOU FROM THE IRRITATION CAUSED BY MISFIT BLADES. ASK FOR THIN GILLETTES
THIN
Gillette
BLADES
4 for 10c

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Enid, you're wonderful," Hank said, gazing down into her eyes

Turn a New Leaf

By MONA FARNSWORTH

Enid Cronin and Hank Barton were regular lovey-dovies over the air waves, but oh, how they fought in private!

ENID stood in front of the microphone and all the pent-up fury of the past weeks blazed from her eyes.

"Oh, darling!" Her voice was throaty, soft. It would come out over the air waves with the tender vibrancy that had made her famous in this act of Adelle and George. "Oh, darling, you know, you must know, how I love you."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I do know you love me," Hank's voice answered hers, but his eyes had a glint in them. Hank was George in the act and the whole thing was ridiculous. To hate a man the way she hated Hank and, day after day, to love him so tenderly over the air—it was sickening, that's what it was. Sickening.

Hank (as George) said, "Sweetheart, look at me. Let me see your eyes." And then, with that deep tenderness that would set every feminine heart a-flutter for hundred of miles around, he said, "My own darling!" And the act was over, though they still held their breaths till Pete grinned at them through the glass wall of the little control room.

Enid Cronin gathered up her script with a careless rattle of paper and turned to the door.

"Look," Hank said. "have you given Pete those minute spots? And have you timed those transcriptions? They go on at eleven. And I still bet that set-up you've picked is too long. And there's the commercial you had to write for the Hard Wood Lumber people. They're paying us for that. Fifty good dollars. And if ever I.Q.B.S. needed fifty dollars this is the moment."

"Are you quite finished?" Enid Cronin had turned at the door and, with frozen politeness, was offering him her strict attention. "Is there anything more that you, the hired help, wish the manager of this station to attend to?" And then, in a scalding rush, her pent-up rage poured out:

"Just who do you think you are, anyhow? Henry Delafield Barton, the wonderful nephew of the man who owns this station—that's who you are! And that's *all* you are. Just a good-looking guy coasting along on the fact that he was born with an uncle who had money enough to back a radio station. Sure you can act on the air, anybody could who had a voice like yours. But could you write a script? Could you do a commercial with a punch to it? And could you manage this station for five minutes the way I can and have for the last two years? No. You couldn't. So shut up! I'll attend to my business and I'll attend to it well. And you, Mister Henry Delafield Barton, attend to yours!"

She whirled at that and fled across the tiny space of reception room into her own office. She slammed the door hard and leaned against it, suddenly shaking, suddenly appalled at what she had done.

SHE'D lose her job now, for sure. She should have kept still. She should have minded Aunt Hitty. Way back six months before when Hank had first turned up, fresh from his last year in college that his service overseas had interrupted, Enid had smelled trouble and Aunt Hitty, sensing it the way the old lady sensed everything, had talked to her about it.

"Men," said Aunt Hitty. "You've got to be smart about managing them, child. If you just look pretty and kind of flighty why, you can twist 'em around your finger. But if they think you've got a bit of brains, they'll fight you to a finish."

"That's just the trouble," Enid had said. "This Hank person works on the assumption that I've no intelligence at all. He tells me how to do everything. He'd tell me how to breathe except that he hasn't thought of that yet. And—and I hate him for it. After all I've run the station for two years and I've done a darn good job. And now he comes in, old know-it-all Barton!"

"Hold your patience," counseled Aunt Hitty. "And hold your tongue along with it. Remember he's not just a man, he's your boss' favorite relative, and you do need your job. Not to buy me bread," she added quickly, for pride was a great thing with Aunt Hitty. "I've got my savings that'll get me into the Old Ladies' Home any minute."

"They will not!" Enid was strong on this point. "You'll never put foot in the Old Ladies' Home while I'm alive. So there!"

"But you've got Jimmy to think of." Aunt Hitty's voice had gone on as if Enid hadn't said a word. "And Jimmy's got to get through high school anyway. In this day and age education's the thing and Jimmy needs his. So you keep your mouth shut and your head cool and hang onto that job. It's a good one."

Well! Enid leaned her burning cheek against the cool wood of her office door. She hadn't kept her head cool and her mouth shut. She'd said everything she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shouldn't have said in just the way she shouldn't have said it. It was ten o'clock now. Hank, without a doubt in the world, would phone and have luncheon with the Old Man at the Chamber of Commerce Club. Come five o'clck, if they worked as fast as the old man usually worked when he'd made up his mind, Enid would be without a job.

And things, for two years, had been going so well. She'd paid about a third on the little house on Grove Street where she and Jimmy and Aunt Hitty lived, she'd been figuring out how she could manage to send Jimmy to State U. that was only forty miles away. She'd been dreaming of the time when, so brilliantly would she have come to manage I.Q.B.S. that the old man would buy up a bigger wavelength and—who knew—the scripts she wrote might be in nation-wide demand.

Dreams. Silly, useless, baseless dreams. She'd thrown the whole thing over just for the pleasure, bitter and furious, of telling that Hank upstart what she thought of him.

The phone rang and, moving from the door heavily, she answered it. It was Gil. She was half engaged to Gil. That is, when he would say anything about the future, a future together, she wouldn't say anything in objection. She'd just let it go that way. So, in the year and a half they'd been going together, it had become a matter of tacit understanding.

Now, phoning from the express office where he had a job, Gil wanted her to meet him for lunch.

"Thanks, Gil, I'd like to. I'd like to lots."

"Is something wrong?" His voice was concerned, solicitous. "You sound upset."

"I am. Oh, Gil!" Tears were suddenly sharp and burning in her eyes. "I'm afraid I've lost—Oh, I can't talk over the phone. I'll tell you all about it at luncheon."

"Isn't there any way you can tell me before? You sound so miserable. Enid!" His tone was suddenly sharp. "You're not having difficulty with your job, are you? You haven't lost it?"

How had he guessed? How did he know? His sympathy and love, of course. It made people practically mind readers.

She said, hastily, with tears stinging her eyelids and threatening her voice, "I'll tell you all about it at luncheon, Gil. The Blue Parrot at one."

DEJECTEDLY she cradled the phone and leaned her forehead against her curled hand. It was good to have Gil like a kind of rock when her world was tipping this way. Maybe being married to him would be a good thing, after all. A good comfortable thing. Maybe.

The door opened and Shiela came in. Shiela was the gal in the outer office who did all the things Hank and Enid didn't have time to do. She was golden and cool and efficient. She was the kind of girl who figured out just what she wanted and then figured out how she could get it.

She said now, with that crisp air of hers, "It's ten-thirty, Enid. What about the Hard-wood Commercial? And if you haven't timed those transcriptions, I will."

"I'll do it," said Enid. The old anger rose. "I suppose Hank sent you to ask," she muttered.

Shiela smiled. "I like to help Hank all I can," she said gently.

"Well, you needn't help him by doing my job for me—at least not yet. Now go along and let me work." But, after Shiela had gone and the door was closed again, Enid look at it thoughtfully. Shiela and Hank. Maybe they could run the office without her. Maybe. And certainly they'd like to!

It was exactly one o'clock when Gil came through the door of the Blue Parrot where she was waiting for him. He came quickly, in that nervous little way he had, and he took both her hands, bending toward her till his eyes were on a level with hers.

"You are troubled," he said. "Tell me all about it. But wait till we get a table and can start eating. I've got to be back in that express office in three-quarters of an hour. Imagine giving a man of my ability the kind of job that only rates three quarters of an hour for lunch! Imagine giving me a boy's job like this anyhow. After the experience I got here at home during the war, you'd think my

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prestige would count for something. But no. I get this boy's job with a boy's salary. At the rate we're going, darling, we'll never be married."

"I know," said Enid. She thought of her own job. She bit her lip and sat down at a little table next to the wall.

They ordered and then Gil sat back.

"Now tell me what's on your mind. It must be something pretty bad. Though I don't see how it could be. Any girl who has a rip-snorting, top-flight job like yours, ought to be indispensable."

"That's just it." Her eyes met his defiantly. "By the end of the day I may not have it!" There. She'd said it. She'd thrown it like a rock or, better, like an ugly twisting snake you can't bear to hold a second in your hand.

The effect on Gil was electric. His jaw dropped. His eyes bulged slightly.

"Enid! You can't be serious. You're joking. Why, you couldn't lose that job. You *are* IQBS. And I've been so proud of you," he added childishly. "I've bragged!"

"I know," said Enid. She was hardly thinking.

Gil pulled himself together a little. "It's your imagination," he decided. "It must be. Why, Enid, you're essential in that station."

"I thought I was. But I'm not. Apparently writing most of the scripts and all the commercials, acting in a dozen skits a week and being business manager isn't enough. It's just small change. Any file clerk could do it in her spare moments. At least that's what Hank Barton thinks."

"Hank Barton?"

"Henry. The white-haired boy who is supposed to me my assistant. The beloved nephew of my boss." And she told Gil what had happened.

Gil listened intently, his eyes on her face, his fingers crumbling bread.

"It's not very hard to see through," he observed when she'd finished. "This Hank is trying to get your job away from you. And you've played right into his hands. You've given him an easy way of getting rid of you."

Enid nodded miserably. She supposed that was true. She'd been a dope not to think of it before. But Hank, if you could ever forget his dratted bossiness, didn't look like the kind who'd do a thing like that. Not an underhanded, behind-your-back kind of thing. His eyes were a good clear deep brown. His hair was brown too and curly, with lights in it. His grin was crooked, kind of teasing, kind of tender, like his voice that could do such things over the air.

SHE told Aunt Hitty this when, after supper that night, she gave an account of what had happened.

Aunt Hitty sniffed. "You've got to learn this about men, child, they're iron-willed. Your Uncle Seth was, but I could get around him the way syrup gets around a sour apple. I always said if I'd been with him that day he drove your mama and papa over the cliff and smashed himself and them to pieces, that he'd never have done it. He was always a downright reckless driver but I could stop him. And I didn't do it by nagging and bossing, either. I did it by sweet-sugaring. Why don't you turn over a new leaf and do the same thing with this Hank down at the station? Chances are you'd keep your job. What did he say when you went back after lunch?"

"Nothing. He didn't speak to me except when he had to. But I'm not fired yet." There was a thin ray of hope in this. "Though maybe he just couldn't have lunch with the old man. Maybe he's waiting to talk it over with him tonight. Maybe they're deciding to fire me right this minute." That was a cold, miserable thought and Enid went to bed with it.

She woke the next morning with it too and it wrapped her around like a wet gray veil. She was going to lose her job and, in a town the size of Carson, she'd never get another like it.

But, by noon, she hadn't lost her job. Though twice when Hank came to lounge in her doorway she'd thought the time had come. Yet, each time, he said nothing about the blowup the previous morning at all. Once he came to ask her about some old scripts he was hunting for and once he asked her to have lunch with him!

She stared. She all but swallowed her tongue. Then, of course, she saw through it. He was going to do the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

firing job with a grand gesture. He was going to feed her, lobster, no doubt and caviar, and then he was going to tell her that his uncle had decided to make him, Hank, manager instead of her. All right, let him do it! Go on, let him. But he needn't think he had to give her a fancy lunch first. She could take whatever he had to say on the chin without coddling.

She had her mouth open to snap a refusal, when she thought of Aunt Hitty. Maybe there was something in what the old lady said.

"I'd love to go to luncheon with you," said Enid. "Thanks."

He took her to the English Grill in the Bolton House, the best hotel in town, and he fed her double lamb chops and tossed salad and ices and smiled at her.

"Look," he said. "I must have been more of a lug than I thought I was to have you land on me the way you did yesterday morning. But the way I looked at it was this. I was hired as your assistant and an assistant is expected to—well, kind of assist. If I make myself clear." He chuckled and she laughed at him before she thought. Then, when she did think, she swallowed the laughter fast. What was his game now? Being so gay and amusing.

"Can't you believe that I want to help?" he said.

She wanted to snap, Well, then, help by doing what I ask you to, what you're hired to do. Don't help by bossing me. But she didn't say it. She thought of Aunt Hitty. She smiled.

"I'm sure you do want to help," she said sweetly. "And, probably now that we've had this blowup to clear the atmosphere, we'll get along fine." Oh, will we? sneered her mind. You think he's going to stop bossing and trying to prove to his uncle how good he is? You think he really doesn't want your job? Be sweet if you like, but don't be a blind ninny.

Yet, looking at him across the table, it was kind of hard to believe that he was kidding her along in order to knife her in the back. His eyes were so warmly brown, his crooked little-boy grin was so open and friendly, and there was a line in his cheek as he half turned his head that put an odd little tug in her heart.

But I hate him, she thought determinedly. I'm only being nice to him because Aunt Hitty says it's the smart way to be, and I've got to keep my job. If it wasn't for that, for Aunt Hitty and Jimmy, she'd walk out and let him have his old job. She would!

They went back to the studio together of course and that afternoon at three was the time they put on their best act, a husband and wife commercial for five local industries. And, for the first time since she'd done it with Hank, she got a kick out of it. It was fun. Twice they laughed at each other spontaneously. Really laughed. And the air audience loves things like that.

BUT Shiela didn't. When Enid got back to her office the golden girl was there waiting.

"Why don't you make up your mind?" she asked acidly. "I thought you were engaged to Gil. What are you making a play for Hank for?"

"A play? I'm not. Look, I've work to do."

"You're having lunch with Hank and any idiot hearing you just now over the air could guess the truth."

"Listen." Enid made her voice very calm. "I'm feeling pretty peaceful at the moment, but I can fight if you're really intent on it. If you're not, it occurs to me that what I do or who I do it with is very much none of your business."

"Oh, isn't it? Well, I'll have you know that Floyd Gilbert's lived next door to me for years and I—I'm not going to have you break his heart if I can help it!"

Enid wanted to laugh and she did, quite merrily. "Oh! So it's Gil you're interested in! Well, well! Hank, of course, doesn't figure in your scheme of things at all." She looked at Shiela a minute, still laughing, and then she said, "Run along, Toots, and do your work. Who do you think you're fooling?"

Enid was having supper when Hank called up.

"Movies," he said. "Do you ever go?"

Again she was ready to say no but,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

back in the dining room, she could practically see Aunt Hitty's ears pulled out listening, so only to please the old lady, she said yes.

"It's a good picture," he told her in that warm voice of his. "Music and color and everything. Like that kind?"

"Did you ever find a girl who didn't?"

She was still smiling with her eyes when she got back to the supper table. Aunt Hitty said nothing but she nodded like a wise old owl.

The movie was gay and sweet and tender. It made you feel as if all the world was made for was to love and be loved and, coming out into the harsh noises and lights of the street, was like coming into the cold after being warmed by a fire.

"Let's drive up on the ledge for a minute," said Hank. "There's a moon. Are you a girl who likes a moon?" He didn't wait for an answer but just bundled her into his green coupe and drove up.

The ledge was a lovely spot. It hung out over Lake Macy, out on the edge of town, and it was known locally as the Lover's Lounge. Enid had been there often with Gil. They'd sit and talk, saying what a lovely spot it was with the water lapping on the rock and the moonlight streaming across the water. Once in awhile Gil would kiss her, a smooth amiable kiss that always made her realize how naturally narrow and a little tight Gil's mouth was. But, up to now, Enid had never given Gil's kisses much thought. She'd just taken them for granted.

But now, suddenly, it was different. Because, suddenly, in the lovely light of that silver moon Hank was kissing her. It had all happened very unexpectedly. He'd turned to say something to her, and he'd just sat there, with the words on his lips, and not said anything. But he'd looked. Through the moonlight misted shadow she'd been able to see his eyes, glowing, deep.

"Enid, you're wonderful. You're sweeter than sweet. Enid!" The last word was against her hair and then his lips, war mand eager had found her lips.

For a shocked second she'd stiffened. Then she couldn't. She was limp and helpless while a warm and radiant happiness such as she'd never known before poured through her. It turned the world to dancing stars. It put heaven in her heart. And, beautifully, wonderfully, it seemed to last for a glorious eternity.

Then, gently, he let her go.

There were no words. There couldn't be. It was all too deep and beautiful for words. So they just sat quiet, her head on his shoulder and the moonlight making a path of silver before them, till, a long time later, Hank kissed her again, gently, tenderly, and drove her home.

The next morning, Enid thought as she lived through it, was the most wonderful morning of her life. It wasn't that Hank said anything much, because he didn't. But just looking at him, and remembering the way he'd kissed her the night before, made everything different. When they stood in front of the microphone doing Adelle and George, it was wonderful to hear Hank say: "Darling, you know I love you more than anything else," because it might be true. Who knew, if things kept on the way they were going?

AT THIS point the thought of Gil crossed her mind but it was like the faintest of shadows across bright sunlight. It was almost as if Gil didn't exist at all. Until that noon when, calling her up again for luncheon, Gil met her at the Blue Parrot.

"I wanted to keep track of you," he said. "This job business of yours has worried me. What's happened?"

"What? Oh, the job." She'd been so busy thinking of Hank that she'd almost forgotten her flurry of panic. Silly, but that's what had happened. She smiled at Gil. "I've still got it. I'm still manager of I.Q.B.S. And I've got a brand new idea. You know that furniture factory that's opening on the south side of town? Well, I'm going out and sell them on the idea of sponsoring a bride-and-groom skit. Fifteen minutes or maybe a half hour. If I can do that it'll prove to the old man that I'm good and it'll tie the job just that much tighter."

"Sure, it will." Gil smiled at her. His flecked eyes had a light in them and he leaned over and patted her hand. "You're a very smart girl, Enid."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She moved her hand. It had never struck her before that Gil's palm was seldom warm. It was usually cold and generally moist. Clammy. Enid's mind whipped back to the feel of Hank's hand on hers, the generous warmth, the bigness of it.

She said, "I guess I was pretty silly the other day. Hank isn't the kind to knife a girl in the back."

"Oh?" Gil's tone had a sarcastic lift to it. "That's what you think?" His eyes narrowed, "You've been seeing a good deal of Hank lately, haven't you?"

Enid met his glance. So Shiela h[ad] been tattling. Shiela no doubt figured, in that clear scheming mind of hers, that if she roused Gil's jealousy, he'd put his foot down, Enid would stop seeing Hank outside the office and that would leave the field clear for her, Shiela. Well, sister, thought Enid, that's not the way it's going to work. Maybe if I were served with an ultimatum by Gil, I might choose Hank myself. Have you thought of that?

But Gil served no ultimatum. Instead he said, "Darling — how about the movies tonight? There's a good picture showing down at the Bijou."

"All right," said Enid. "Let's." After all that was little enough to do to please Gil, go to the movies with him. But only the surface of her mind was thinking all this. Deep down she was bubbling with ideas about this United Furniture account. She pushed back her chair. "I'll have to go, Gil. I want to hurry back and get to work. See you later. Look! Why don't you come for supper? Aunt Hitty'd love it."

"Sure," said Gil. "See you."

She got back to the office in a fever of enthusiasm for the furniture factory deal. In fact she was so enthusiastic that, running yellow paper into her typewriter, she went right to work outlining her ideas.

She worked all afternoon stopping only when she had to go to the mike herself, and she was so absent-minded and absorbed that Hank spoke of it.

"You must have something terrific on your mind," he said. "Unless, maybe, you're falling in love?" His eyes twinkled.

It was five o'clock when, leaving her office to get a drink of water, she came back to find him thumbing through the sheets she'd been working on.

"Say! This is good." His eyes beamed at her. "You've really got a lot on the ball, Enid. I gather it's that new furniture factory you're aiming at. Gosh, if we could get them, Uncle Henry would sure be pleased. He says if the station was making a little more money he'd get a bigger wave-length. He's got a chance to but just now the accounts we have don't warrant it. But this furniture company coming in might change things."

"Maybe," said Enid. "We haven't got them yet." But her eyes were shining. She had a feeling they were practically in the bag. "I'll go out to see them the first thing in the morning."

ENID was still shining-eyed and sparkling at the supper table with Gil and Aunt Hitty. Aunt Hitty loved it and was gay too but Gil was quiet and moody. He looked worried. He stayed that way all the time they were at the movies and afterwards, when they went to Corley's for a coke, he was still silent. Maybe, thought Enid, he was jealous of Hank and if that was it—well, they'd have to talk it out sometime, wouldn't they?

But it wasn't Hank, it was her job he was worried about. She asked him finally and he admitted it.

"Your job means a lot to me," he said. "Because without it, and with all the handicaps they're putting in my way down at the office, I don't see how we're ever going to get married. And I'm a man, Enid, who wants a home of his own. I'm tired of living with my parents like a child. I want my own place. My own wife. And without your job, Enid, we'll never get married!"

Enid looked at him and suddenly she knew the truth. "Gil, would you be terribly upset if we didn't get married?" she asked. She stopped because the look in Gil's eyes had changed so. It was narrow, sharp.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"Just this." Everything was very clear. Like a mountain abruptly washed of all mist. "I like you but it's not love. Friendship is just not enough to base a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whole future together on. Don't you see?"

The look in Gil's eyes changed to anger.

"I see this!" He was almost shouting. "I see that something's happened in the last few days to change you completely. And my guess is that this Hank has done it. Probably he's made love to you. That's usually the way a man gets what he wants."

"Stop it!" Enid shoved her chair back and stood up so fast that it toppled and crashed over backward. "I won't have you saying things like that."

"All right, don't listen!" Gil was on his feet too. "But you'll find out what I say is true. You'll find out!" He paused. There was really no use finishing the sentence. Enid was on her way to the door.

It was only nine-thirty the next morning when she was shown into the office of Bowdoin Keene, the advertising head of the United Furniture and Lumber Company. He lifted his gray head and turned his eyes from the mass of papers on his desk. Then, abruptly, he stood up and smiled.

"I didn't expect the manager of I.Q.B.S. to be so young, nor so lovely." He smiled.

Enid smiled back at him. Young and lovely, was she? Well, she could be businesslike too. She brought out the sheaf of papers she'd worked on and prepared to sell him on her ideas.

But at the first word he held up his hand.

"I was afraid of this when your name was sent in. Miss Cronin, what position do you hold with the radio station you are representing?"

"I manage it." Enid gripped the papers in her lap. What was he driving at?

"But you don't own it. Have you gotten the okay of the owner to present me with these ideas and sell me this space?"

"I don't need the owner's permission. Why should I? I've sold lots of space without his permission. I wouldn't be manager if he didn't have faith in my judgment."

Bowdoin Keene shrugged and he looked very apologetic. "I know nothing of that, of course," he said. "That would be an understanding purely between you and Henry Barton—that is Henry Barton the First who owns your station. I only know—" he paused and looked still more apologetic.

"Mr. Keene, what are you trying to tell me?"

"That you're too late with your ideas for a program sponsored by us. I was approached last evening in my home and was presented with an excellent outline for such a program—and the whole outline had the hearty support of Mr. Barton himself. In fact Barton and I have already discussed it at length over the phone. We've played golf together and are very friendly. So I am afraid you're too late."

"Yes. I can see I am." Enid stood up. She was so angry she felt cold. Hank and his love-making! Hank and his kisses! Hank and his charming enthusiasm over her brilliant idea!

She managed to keep a smile on her face till she got out into the corridor. Then she let go, allowing all the bitterness and hurt and disappointment to rise and surge through her.

Scorn for herself burned along with scorn for Hank. That she'd been such a fool to let the wool be pulled over her eyes! That she'd been so blind, so weak, so—so everything! She ought to call Gil up and apologize. That's what she ought to do.

Gil's clear hard mind had been a lot more sensible in the long run than her crazy, impetuous enthusiasm.

YET, as it turned out, she didn't have to call Gil. He was waiting for her at the street entrance of the radio station.

"I called your office and found you were out so, as I had an errand at the bank, I ran over to have a word with you. Well, to be honest, Enid, I wanted to tell you I was sorry for making you so angry last night. The only excuse I can offer is that you upset me horribly by breaking what I had come to consider our engagement though, to be honest with you, I will admit I had never formally proposed."

"Oh, that's all right." Enid was in no mood to listen to long, stupid apologies. "I—I guess you had grounds for bawl-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing me out. I've just come from Mr. Keene."

"Mr. Keene?" Gil's tone was politely questioning.

"The advertising head of United Furniture."

"Oh? How did it go? Well, I hope. If you got the account because I know it will mean to you. Did you get it?"

"No." Enid made it sound like a bomb. "No, somebody had gotten there before me. Somebody had sold Keene on the idea before I had a chance. Somebody who'd gotten the okay of old man Barton before I'd had a chance to say a word. While I was at the movies last night with you, they fixed it all up."

"Oh." Gil's tone was flat, his eyes had a blank look. "Well—I guess there's no use my proposing formally. I was going to. I was going to ask you to lunch this noon and get all this cleared up." He smiled thinly. "But if you're losing your job, it's all pretty hopeless, isn't it? I'm sorry, Enid. Of course, you wouldn't want one of those endless engagements."

"I don't," said Enid. "I don't want any engagement at all!"

She turned and ran up the stairs to the studio. She never wanted to see Gil again. She never wanted to see anyone again. For two cents she'd resign from radio completely and go into hibernation. Except that that would be just what Hank wanted. That would play directly into the double-crossing, idea-stealing fool's hands.

She opened the studio door and crossed to her office. And there, comfortably ensconced in her office chair, was the gentleman himself blandly and nervily reading some more of her scripts.

She stood in the doorway and was so mad that every word in her blazing mind got clogged tight in her throat.

Hank, turning a page, looked up to find her there.

"Hi-ya, Toots!" Then he saw her eyes. "What's the matter? You look mad."

"You're the matter! Reading my scripts, stealing my ideas, sneaking behind my back and doing all my work for me, before I have a chance to do it for myself! And then you have the consummate nerve to sit there, like a bland fool, and say 'What's the matter? Oh, get out of here! Get *out!* And if I get fired for talking to you like this, it'll be worth it! You double-dealer! Oh, get out." This last was heavy with disgust and weariness. Her fury had drained with the storm of her words, like water rushing the outlet of a dam and now that was all she felt, disgust and weariness.

Hank got. Hé went out the door and closed it definitely behind him. But, hardly had he closed it when he opened it again.

"Adelle and George go on in eleven minutes," he said. "What do you intend to do about it?"

What did she intend to do about it? Go on the air, of course. Radio is like the theatre. Come hail or snow, death or disaster, the show must go on.

"Your script ought to be on your desk," she said. "I put it there last night."

According to schedule eleven minutes later they went on. And nineteen minutes later Hank, in that special deeply tender voice of his was, as George, telling Enid, as Adelle, how all the world would turn to ashes if she believed the slander she'd been told and turned against him.

"Don't you know," pleaded George, "that you can trust me?"

"Oh, I want to," said Adelle. "I really want to because—"

"Because?"

"Because, no matter what, I love you, George."

THERE was a lot more to the act but they got through it finally, though it left Enid with a crazy desire to stamp her feet and scream and, even more than that, to bury her head in her arms and cry.

She did this last when she finally got home. And it was so Aunt Hitty found her when the old lady, worried, came up and knocked on her bedroom door.

"You were so quiet up here," she said. "But awhile back I thought I heard you sob. Have you lost your job?"

"No, I haven't lost my job. Not yet." Enid got up off the bed and opened the door. "Come on in. I'm just mad, I guess." And she told her all about the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

United Furniture.

Aunt Hitty shook her head. "I can't understand it," she muttered. "Can't understand any part of it."

"Part of what?"

"Nothing." Aunt Hitty turned toward the door smoothing her apron. "Come on, child. Get up and wash your face. There's fried ham and fresh raised biscuits and quince preserves for supper." She looked at Enid again. "Say, you haven't mentioned Gil for a long time. Have you two stopped going together?"

"Yes, it amounts to that." While Aunt Hitty was frying the ham and watching the biscuits in the oven, Enid told her about Gil.

"So, it looks as if I'll probably die an old maid now that I've turned Gil down," Enid said. She made it sound like a joke, but maybe it wasn't a joke. Eligible men were not so plentiful in a town the size of this town. And, offhand, she couldn't think of much of anybody to replace Gil. When a thought of Hank popped into her mind, she instantly stamped out the idea the way you stamp on a cutworm in the garden.

She went to bed finally, still cross, and she woke up the same way. Life was a mess. A disappointing, disillusioning, horrible mess, but she'd be darned if she was going to let it lick her. She decided this last as she was going down town on the bus and she decided it so definitely that, much to the surprise of the girl sitting next to her, she clenched her fists tight and pounded them a little. She'd find another account to whip up, that's what she'd do. If Hank had swiped her furniture idea, she'd get another. There were always ideas if you just concentrated enough. Now maybe the florists in town, or the music stores, or that huge dairy farm that made cheeses and things.

Her mind began whipping along at a great rate and she was almost cheerful by the time she climbed the flight of stairs and opened her office door.

"Oh!" Her cheerfulness died. Her startled eyes met those of the man seated so comfortably in her office chair. A small worm of fear began to creep up her spine.

"Good morning, Mr. Barton," she said.

Henry Barton the First—Henry Barton the boss—looked at her over his gold-bowed pince nez. Then he took them off and wiped them slowly, still looking at her.

"I trust you will forgive my—er—borrowing your office. I have an appointment here shortly. So I took the liberty."

"Oh, of course," said Enid. "After all it is, primarily, *your* office." So it had come. Two days late, but here it was. He'd come down to fire her. The deal Hank had put over with United Furniture had clinched the whole thing. The boss had come down to fire her and hand the job over to Hank. Well, face it. That was all you ever could do when a blow struck. Stick out your neck and take it.

She said, "I'll take my papers into the file room." She began to gather them up.

"Not at all. Not at all." He stopped her with a wave of his hand. "Matter of fact I'd like to have you stay here. I'd like to have you here when the—er—person I have the appointment with comes in."

"Oh?" said Enid, surprised. Then, quickly, she murmured, "Yes, sir," and put the papers down again.

"It will only take a moment," said Mr. Barton.

Naturally, thought Enid. I'm surprised that it's this long. You live with your delightful nephew, don't you. So why couldn't you have come down together? Why be so coy as to make an appointment with a member of your family?

Then a knock came on the door and she knew the moment had come.

"Come in," boomed Mr. Barton. And the door opened.

SHIELA stood on the threshold.

"Oh!" Her eyes darted from one face to another. Then, angrily, they blazed. "You told me this was to be a private conference, Mr. Barton."

"You thought your theft wouldn't be discovered?" Enid's tone was sweet. She was amazed that it came out as a tone at all. Because she was so mad, so choked with fury. So they were in together on this. Hank hadn't done it alone. He'd had to have a girl's skirts

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to hide behind.

"I suppose you think you and Hank can run this station beautifully all by yourselves!" Enid went on. "I suppose you thing the programs I slave over just appear on the air by a wave of the hand. Well, you'll discover they don't. You'll find that running a broadcasting station entails a lot more than stealing accounts! And if you want Hank badly enough to do all this for him I hope you succeed."

"Hank!" There was scorn and rage in Shiela's tone. "I don't want Hank—I want Gil. And you were treating him abominably. You were two-timing him."

"I wasn't." Something was bursting into song beside Enid and it showed in her voice. "I've never loved Gil. There was never anything much between us except friendship and understanding."

"And your job!" Shiela snapped. "Oh, you didn't know it, maybe, but Gil's always done a lot of bragging about your job. He told me the other day that when you two were married you'd always have a nice house and a car and things because you were so smart."

"Oh. He did, did he?" It all was brutally clear now. Though of course Gil himself had made it pretty clear.

Shiela raved on. "I've always loved Gil. Always. Ever since we were little, but he's never paid much attention to me because I wasn't clever and didn't have a good job like you. So I thought and Gil thought it would be wise to make myself more valuable here."

"Gil! Did Gil *know* what you were doing?"

"Of course he knew. He helped me. He figured you were losing out anyway and if I could create a better place for myself in the office here, it wouldn't do any harm. And then *I* thought that maybe—maybe if I proved how smart I was Gil would finally pay attention to me and that would be wonderful."

"A fine pair," said Enid. "That's all I've got to say. A fine pair!"

"You took the words right out of my mouth." Hank had come in some time during all this and he was standing just inside the door grinning. "That's why I got Uncle Henry to make this appointment today. I thought you'd appreciate the setup. And the minute your Aunt Hitty called me up late last night and told me what you suspected me of doing, I understood the situation."

"Aunt Hitty called you up? Aunt Hitty!"

"She certainly did. She's a wonderful old lady. To her I owe my all—or at least I hope I do. Enid, you mean everything to me!"

"Oh, Hank!" Shame rushed over her. All the awful things she'd thought and said about him—and none of them true. She wanted terribly to tell him all she felt but she couldn't seem to say more than just, "Oh, *Hank*!"

AND, strangely, Hank seemed to understand this too. He reached for her and got an arm around her.

"Look here, Unc," he said to Mr. Barton, "If I can talk smoothly enough to get this gal to marry me, and I think maybe I can, who's going to manage the station here?"

Henry Barton the First looked bewildered. "Why she is. She's a darn' good girl at it. You'll never find a better."

"But," said Hank, "when she gets so she can't when we're wondering whether it's going to be a boy or a girl, what'll we do? You know, girls shouldn't work *all* the time."

"Hank!" said Enid—and found that she was blushing.

Mr. Barton laughed right out loud. "Oh," said he. "Well, when those circumstances arise, we'll deal with them. Let it never be said that Henry Barton can't handle domestic problems."

Enid laughed joyfully. And then she stopped laughing because Hank was kissing her. And what girl can laugh when she's being kissed? That is, properly kissed. And Enid was.

Coming Next Month: ONE HEART WAITED, a Fascinating Romantic Novelet by JERROLD BEIM—BLOCK THAT BLONDE, an Enthralling Novelet by JEAN FRANCIS WEBB—and many other glamorous stories!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Love Wears a Mask

By SHIRLEY MANNERS

Adventure beckons to Frances Brown—and before she knows it she consents to take part in a glamorous impersonation that leads her to the threshold of romantic enchantment!

CHAPTER I

VANISHING STAR

IT IS difficult not to be aware that one is being stared at, when one is a very pretty girl. Frances looked up from the bowl of flowers she was arranging, to meet the intense gaze of a tall young man, standing just outside the florist's window. As she took in the fact that he was dark, broad-shouldered, and good-looking, she realized that the stare was by no means casual.

Flushing slightly, she dropped her eyes, turned her back, and self consciously continued her work. Men often looked lingeringly at her, and being human, she appreciated the compliment in their admiring regard, but never before had she encountered so rudely deliberate a stare.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The night's still young," Larry said. "Shall we take my car and drive up the Hudson a bit? What do you say?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Frances heard the outer door open, but did not lift her head for her fingers were busy.

"I beg your pardon."

Frances looked up. It was the man who had been staring at her through the window. He was even better-looking, at closer range, and smartly tailored. He was still ogling at her! Frances stiffened.

"Is there something I can do for you, sir?" she asked, coldly. She'd put this wolf in his place.

"Yes. Tell me your name."

Frances glared. "I beg your pardon!"

"I'm not trying to flirt, Miss," he said, hastily. "I've a reason for asking you, a very important reason. Please tell me your name?"

"Why should I?" she demanded somewhat flustered.

"Then tell me who you *aren't*," he begged. "Your first name isn't by any chance—*Monica*?"

Her eyes opened wide with surprise. "No, it's Frances. Why?"

"Are you an American?"

"Certainly. Why?"

"Have you any Scandinavian blood in your veins, by any chance?" He smiled ingratiatingly. "I'm serious."

She looked startled.

"Why, yes, on my grandmother's side. She was Swedish. I get my coloring from her."

"Honey-blonde, green eyes, and that lovely, unmistakable mouth," he mused. "And same nose—even same height."

"What are you talking about?"

"Let me ask you just one more thing. Have you any relatives that you know of in Denmark? Anyone by name of Lindquist, perhaps?"

SHE shook her head.

"Not that I know of. What is this, anyway? A quiz contest?"

"No." He smiled, displaying even white teeth. "It's just that you're the image of a young lady I know. I hadn't thought she was in town. I'm sorry to have troubled you, Miss—" He looked at her inquiringly.

"No trouble at all," said Frances, politely, and said nothing more.

He tipped his hat, thanked her, and left. After he was gone, she was rather sorry she had not told him her name. She now felt that she would have liked to have known him better.

It was two mornings later, just before luncheon, that he re-appeared.

"Good morning, Miss Brown."

She changed color, recognizing him.

"How did you find out my name?"

"I telephoned the shop, here," he confessed.

"I'm sorry, but I'm very busy." She made as if to move away.

"No, don't go!" He took a business card from his pocket, and handed it to her. "I'm Larry Harwood, of the ITA—International Talent Agency. We handle movie stars, directors, writers, orchestras, and the like. I want to have a business talk with you. Would you lunch with me?"

Frances was startled. The engraved card he had given her showed he had spoken the truth. He read the obvious speculation in her eyes, and smilingly shook his head.

"It's not about signing you up for the movies, Miss Brown, although that isn't an impossibility. It's bona fide business. I can put you in the way of making a sum of money, quite legitimately. Won't you hear it? Over a luncheon-table, anywhere you say?"

She hesitated, then accepted.

They lunched at a quiet but expensive East Side bistro, a few blocks away. He ordered expertly, then smiled at her across the table.

"I'll explain briefly, Miss Brown. I stared at you a few days ago, because seeing you gave me a shock. I thought that you were somebody else, someone I'm most anxious to see, someone who is supposed to be in Europe." He hesitated. "I'll be frank if you'll promise to keep what I say in strict confidence." Intrigued, she nodded, and he went on.

"You resemble a sensational new Scandinavian stage actress who's never been to America," he said. "She's a temperamental lass who keeps her comings and goings a secret and has been in retirement for several months. News that she was coming here was printed in a gossip column of a tabloid about a week ago but I didn't pay any attention to the rumor until you gave me such a jolt. Do I make myself clear, so far?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yes," answered Frances. "Go on."

"Well, meeting you gave me an idea," Harwood said. "This actress has been quarreling with her business representatives for the last year. I'm a talent agent and, if she's planning to switch into the movies at Hollywood, I'd like to make the contract for her. Other agents in town are also breaking their necks trying to get in touch with her."

Harwood paused for a moment, took a long breath, and resumed.

"Strange to say, yesterday I was tipped off, by a friend, that she was really arriving, incognito, on the *Queen* last night. As I say, like many artists, she's temperamental and, as far as I can ascertain, she did not arrive with the other passengers. In fact, I've learned by overseas telephone that she canceled her reservation at the last minute, and I can't find out why she didn't sail, or where she is. My friend in London says she checked out of her hotel, without leaving a forwarding address. And she didn't leave by air. He's trying to trace her, now."

"It sounds very exciting," said Frances.

"It's more than that—it's nerve-racking," said Mr. Harwood, gloomily. "Because of my competitors, I've got to get to her first when she does arrive. In the meantime I must make them think that she's out of their reach until I do get a chance at her."

FRANCES was intrigued by the story. "How do you propose to do that?" she wanted to know.

"That's where you come in," said Larry Harwood. "I got a brain-wave about you during the night, and I think it could work. At least, I've sold my office top men on the idea. I want you to do me a favor, and make yourself a little money and, incidentally, have yourself a fling, at the same time. How about it?"

"You'll have to tell me more about it."

"The idea is simple," said the agent, eagerly. "You resemble this girl close enough to be her twin sister. Well, I want you to impersonate her for a week. Nothing wrong, or crooked, mind you!" he added hastily. "We'll just let word get around town that you're she, and not deny it. If you'll agree, the office will take a suite for you at the Hotel Aldorff, and pay all expenses. We'll also stake you to a small, but glamorous-enough wardrobe. And we'll give you five hundred dollars for doing the job, when it's over. All you have to do is let me take you around town to the various smart night clubs, openings, and so forth, and do as I say. We'll want you to impersonate her for perhaps a week or ten days, probably. If it's more than a week, your bonus will be higher. What do you say?"

She looked dazed. "But what about my job?"

"You can make some excuse and pretend to leave town. No one will know the difference. You'll be five hundred to perhaps a thousand dollars richer, when you return, not to mention owning a swank new wardrobe, with my firm's compliments. You've nothing to lose and everything to gain. Who knows? Maybe you'll break in pictures yourself? Anyway, it'll be an interesting adventure. How about it?"

Frances demurred at first, but she did have an adventurous soul, and she *could* use the money. Also what girl could resist the possibility of a smart new wardrobe normally quite beyond her reach, without strings attached? Luckily she knew she could get away from her job, as he suggested. More than Larry Harwood's persuasive arguments, however, was the man himself! She liked him and wanted to see more of him.

"What's the actress's name?" she asked.

"Monica Lindgaard," said Harwood, and smiled, for he knew he had won. "Here, I'll show you her picture, and how much you look like her. I want you to have your hair done over, and wear make-up just as she does. And I'll want you to start this very afternoon. Everyone must think you did arrive, incognito, on the *Queen* last night."

And so the adventure began.

Before luncheon was over, Larry had telephoned the Aldorff to reserve a suite for "Miss Frances Brown," and told the manager, 'confidentially', to deliver any mail or cables addressed to Miss Monica Lindgaard at the apartment. He knew, as he explained to Frances, that it would

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not be long before the "incognito" rumor would be all over town. At the same time, Frances—by registering under her own name—actually was making no false impersonation; she was allowing persons to deceive themselves. Then, after Frances had telephoned her employer and obtained a long due two weeks vacation, he took her on a shopping tour.

It was late in the afternoon when the two, after hours of fittings and selections at dress shops arrived at the Aldorff, and went to Frances's new suite.

Larry looked around the luxurious suite, at the unopened boxes which had already arrived, with satisfaction.

"One more thing," he asked, suddenly. "Have you any kind of personal entanglements—er—any boy friend who might come looking for you, and ball up the works?" There was more than casual interest in the question.

Frances hesitated, thinking of Robert Willard, a boy who still thought he was going to marry her. Luckily, Bob, so far as she knew, was back home out in the midwest.

"No, not here in New York. I've only been in New York four months."

"That's swell! Now take a nice hot bath, rest for a couple of hours, then pick yourself one of those new evening gowns we bought ready-made, and doll up. We're going stepping tonight. I'll pick you up at eight o'clock. Okay?"

Frances nodded. She was too tired to talk more.

"And don't forget what I told you: try to look and act foreign and mysterious, and as if you're seeing New York night life for the first time."

"That won't be hard," she said. "I haven't seen much of anything, except the Museum."

"That's fine!" he approved, grinning. "It'll be easier to play the part. So long—Monica Lindgaard!" He gave her a gay parting salute, and left.

"Monica Lindgaard!" After the first ecstatic examination of her new wardrobe, Frances lay soaking in a scented bath, and repeated the name to herself. What was she like—the real Monica? Could they be, somehow, remotely related? Would she ever meet her? Well, at least Frances would have the chance to play a real Cinderella for a week. It would be fun. She wondered what Bob Willard would think about it, when eventually she wrote him about the adventure. Dear old Bob—so safe, so secure and unexciting! He would probably disapprove heartily. Bob, like all the staid, conservative Willards, hated unconventionality. Maybe she should have married him before she left, instead of coming to New York for a year's fling.

CHAPTER II

Gay Adventure

LARRY HARWOOD called for her at eight, handsome in a dinner jacket, with a red carnation. He brought her a magnificent corsage of orchids—a movie star's corsage.

"You shouldn't have done that!" she gasped. None knew better than she, the prices of orchids.

"It's all on the expense account of ITA!" he told her. "And the evening too, so we'll shoot the works. Enjoy it while you can, my girl!" He inspected her with admiration, noting the revealing evening frock, and the new coiffure. "I was right. Only I'll bet the real Lindgaard isn't half as glamorous, as you are, my pet." He offered her his arm, with an exaggerated gesture. "Let's step into the pumpkin coach, Cinderella, and be off to the ball!"

Larry's gaiety set the mood for the evening. They had dinner at the fashionable Flamingo Club, where he had reserved a floor table. Here Larry seated her with the exaggerated deference of a talent agent handling a million-dollar client. Champagne in a cooler appeared as if by magic. He ordered, grandly, while Frances, acting under instructions, looked about her with a curiosity by no means faked. To anyone watching them, it was easy to see that it was the first time she had ever been in the Flamingo.

"Don't look now," said he, sotto-voce,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"but every wolf and half the columnists in town are giving you the double-oh. They're already wondering who the heck you are. Because of my business, they know that most of the women I escort are celebrities. If anyone comes over, let me do the talking."

Frances nodded, enjoying herself mightily. The food was delicious, and the wine lifted her spirits. When they rose to dance, she found that Larry danced beautifully. Just feeling the strength in his arms, about her, gave her a thrill.

If he was similarly stirred, he failed to show it.

"Like the music here?" he asked, holding her close. He was tall enough for the top of her head to fit against his cheek.

"It's divine. I didn't know anyone could dance so well," she told him.

"Thanks. You're rather a wonderful dancer yourself, Miss *Lind*—" he said, somewhat loudly, then caught himself. "I mean *Miss Brown!*" He smiled down into her face as they circled the floor, through the thickening crowd of dancers. He whispered: "I did that on purpose. Let's go back to our table."

They did. She asked him why.

"That red-headed chap with the brunette is Art Clark, my sharpest competitor," Larry said. "His agency wants Monica Lindgaard on their list of clients." He grinned at her. "Just watch! He'll be over on some excuse or other. Oh, oh! Here he comes, now!"

Sure enough, the red-headed man was bearing down on their table with his partner. Elaborately casual. He stopped, hailing Larry affectionately. Larry returned the greeting coldly.

"Nice to have seen you, Art," Larry said. "Run along now. I'm busy."

But the other agent was staring at Frances.

"I want you to meet a little friend of mine, Larry, Miss Ryan." He looked at Frances. "Your pardon, but haven't we met in Paris—no, Stockholm! Aren't you Monica Lindgaard?"

"There's something wrong with your eyesight!" sneered Larry. "This young lady has never been east of the Jersey Meadows." Larry gave Frances a nudge with his elbow which the keen-eyed Clark duly noted. "Meet Miss Brown, Art. Mr. Clark, Miss Ryan."

Frances, following instructions, merely nodded pleasantly, with condescension.

"You're kidding!" said the agent, his eyes still on Frances.

"Peddle your papers somewhere else," Larry advised him firmly. "I'm not investing all this hard-earned dough entertaining Miss Brown, for you to enjoy staring at her. Scoot!"

THE other couple reluctantly passed on. Frances laughed, very low. This was great fun.

"Well!" she exclaimed, "I hope I don't end up behind bars."

"It won't," Larry said. "Anyway, we've got Art Clark on the hook. He'll be digging up Monica's photos before he sleeps. By tomorrow, the rumors will be all over town that Monica Lindgaard is staying incognito at the Aldorff. Now, if only New York will just keep thinking that until our people in London locate the real Monica. Here's hoping we catch the brass ring!" He suggested: "The night's still young. What do you say we take my car, and drive up the Hudson a bit?"

Frances readily agreed.

In Larry's roadster, they drove across town to Riverside Drive, and up along the Hudson. It was a warm early Spring night, and the sky was full of stars. Larry lowered the convertible top, and Frances put her head back against the seat, and watched the flickering lights on the Jersey Palisades, and the George Washington Bridge looming to the north.

From her position, she could study Larry's profile. She idly wondered how many other girls had ridden beside him, secretly admiring that profile. There must have been a great many, she thought, most of them very beautiful.

Almost as if he had been reading her thoughts, Larry slowed the car to a halt, and parked it in a shadowy turnout off the Drive, facing the river.

"Beautiful view from here, isn't it?" he said. "And look back down the Drive at that serpentine string of lights. They're like a diamond necklace, aren't they?"

Frances turned her head sideways,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and admired the lights. Of a sudden she was aware that he, on the contrary, was looking at her, admiring her face.

"Monica Lindgaard must be an extraordinarily beautiful woman," said he.

"Why?" she asked.

"Because you're so much like her." There was unmistakable sincerity in his voice. "You are beautiful, you know. I can tell. I'm a merchant of beauty. *And* talent, of course."

"It's a pity I'm not talented, as well," said she lightly, her heart suddenly beating double-time.

"I'm glad you're not," said Larry. "For then you'd be ambitious for a career in pictures and hard and calculating, like all the rest. You're different, even if you do resemble that Danish actress so much."

His arm slid down about her shoulders and his face bent down over her own.

"You're completely lovely!" said Larry, huskily, and laid his lips upon hers.

Frances shivered, caught in a deep, soul-disturbing emotion. He was going to kiss her, she knew, and, somehow, she was sorry. She closed her eyes. As his lips touched hers, she did not respond, only sat within his embrace, stiff and waiting.

Larry must have sensed the shiver for he drew back even as his lips brushed hers, and removed his arm.

"I'm sorry," said he. "Please forgive me. I didn't mean to take advantage of our—relationship."

"It's all right," she told him, sitting up very straight, and staring at the distant Bridge. "But I'm glad you didn't." Yet contrarily she felt disappointed.

"It won't happen again," said Larry. "I promise." He started the motor. "I guess we'd better go home. We've a heavy day tomorrow." He turned the roadster and headed back down the drive.

It was a long time before Frances fell asleep that night.

The next day, when they met for lunch, it was as if the incident of the night before had never happened, to her relief. They went to Twenty-One, mecca of the top-brackets of the entertainment world, and were ushered to a choice table.

Art Clark, Larry noted, had secured a table, near to them.

"He probably checked all over town to find out where I had a reservation." Larry told Frances. "Don't look now, but he's consulting a photograph, folded inside that magazine he's holding. Dollars to doughnuts, it's one of Lindgaard."

AS THEY lunched, enjoyably, Larry introduced Frances to several friends and acquaintances as "Miss Brown." But rumors were already afloat, for she was the cynosure of many eyes. Clark left the restaurant just before they did. As the two emerged into Fifty-Second Street, a boy dashed up to Frances.

"Can I have your autygraft, Miss Lindgaard?" he begged, shoving an autograph book and a pencil at her.

Frances, forewarned by Larry, reacted properly. She first made as if to take them, then sharply withdrew her hand, shaking her head.

"You've got the wrong lady," said Larry, good-naturedly. "It's a mistake."

The child drew back, disappointed. As Frances and Larry stepped out upon the sidewalk, they saw Art Clark standing nearby, watching and listening intently. They pretended not to notice him and walked away.

By the time they had returned to Frances' hotel, there were a number of telephone calls for her, with numbers to call back—among them, Clark's. She called none of them.

They went to dinner, theatre, and a fashionable night club together, that evening. This time there were significant whisperings and craning of heads. The gossip about Monica Lindgaard's incognito already was racing about town. By morning, it would appear in many of the gossip columns.

However, Frances now was more interested in her companion than in her masquerade. She had been with the talent agent most of her waking hours for two days and evenings, and had become fascinated by him. Larry knew everyone, and had been everywhere. He was entertaining, amusing, and a good

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dancer. And the feeling of conspiracy between them but added to their sense of intimacy.

Larry brought her home rather later that night, than usual, too late, as he mentioned in the taxi, to come up for a nightcap.

"It's been a wonderful evening," she told him, her eyes radiant. "Ive never had so much fun in my life. I hope Lindgaard never comes."

"So do I—almost," said Larry. He looked at her intently. "Do you know, you're rather wonderful?"

Just then the taxi drew up at her hotel.

"Thank you," said Frances. She was suddenly too filled with emotion for talk. She was glad she was home. "Thanks for everything. Goodnight." She opened the door quickly, gave him a half-smile, and hurried inside the revolving door without a backward look. He did not follow.

Up in her suite, she went to the window, and stared down into the night. She thought: I'm falling in love with Larry, and I don't mean a thing to him. I'm just another girl, not half as pretty as the glamour-girls he goes with. I'm only an employee that he's taking out for business reasons. And she was suddenly very sorry that she had ever let herself agree to become involved in this affair.

CHAPTER III

Telegram From Home

NEXT morning the ringing of the telephone awakened her. She glanced at the clock, and saw that it was nearly ten o'clock. The operator announced that Mr. Harwood was on the line. Frances' heart leaped absurdly.

"Put him on, please."

"Hello, Miss Brown?" It was a strange, but familiar voice. "Please don't hang up until you've heard me out as this was the only way I could get to you. It's very important."

"Who is this?" she demanded.

"Art Clark. I met you with Larry. All I want to know is, have you signed with a studio, yet?"

She hesitated. After all, she was being paid to play a certain game, to help Larry.

"No."

"Have you signed a managerial contract with ITA?" he asked, urgently. "Just answer me that, please, and I won't bother you any more, if you don't want me to."

"I don't see where that's anyone's affair but my own," said Frances.

"Business is business, and I know you're a smart business woman as well as a great artist. I am prepared to offer you a contract with a major studio at practically your own terms, if you'll only give me an opportunity to discuss it with you, Miss Lindgaard."

She hesitated a long moment, purposely, as if weighing various factors in her mind.

"I'm sorry, but I don't know what you're talking about, Mr. Clark." She hung up. She hadn't denied she was Monica Lindgaard. But she hadn't pretended she was, either. Let Clark draw what conclusions he liked.

She telephoned Larry, and reported the conversation.

"That's fine!" said he, with satisfaction. "I'm waiting to receive a cable any minute, letting me know where I can reach our real girl friend. In the meantime, we'll keep Clark and the rest guessing. Now, how about lunch? I know a quiet little joint with lots of atmosphere, across town. Inexpensive, but romantic."

"But I thought you wanted me to be seen?"

"This lunch is on me, not the firm," said Larry. "I'm lunching with a gal who works in a florist shop, a gal named Brown. Okay?"

"Okay," said Frances, and hung up, her eyes bright.

They did not once discuss Monica Lindgaard, at luncheon. Larry told her all about himself, and she told him about Bob Willard. They laughed a lot, about nothing. It was a very enjoyable meal. They separated, at length, reluctantly. Larry had an appointment with a client.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It was a beautiful day, clear and sunny, and Frances decided to take a walk in the park. She had a lot to think about.

She wandered through the zoo, and past it, to a small, rather secluded pond, where she sat down upon a bench and thought about Larry. How much did he really care for her—Larry, who had met so many beautiful girls. How serious could a man like that ever really get about an ordinary girl? She thought about Bob Willard, to whom she'd have to give a definite answer some day, whom, she had always believed she would eventually marry. Was she right, letting herself dream thus about Larry? Was it fair to Bob? She was glad, of a sudden, that Bob was not in New York, but half a continent away.

The voice of a child, crying, reached her ears. Frances looked up, and saw a little boy, about five years old, wandering toward her, weeping bitterly. There was something very familiar-looking about the child: she was convinced she had seen him, before.

"Hello there, young man!" she called out, cheerily. "What's the trouble?"

He came over to her.

"I'm losted. I can't find my nanny." He burst into fresh tears. "I'm scared!"

FRANCES took him into her arms, and used her handkerchief to dry his tears.

"Don't cry. We'll find your nurse. What's your name?"

"Billy."

"Billy what?" Where *had* she seen him before?

"Just Billy." He sniffled.

Suddenly, in a flash, she remembered. Why, he was staying in her own hotel. She had seen him, several times, in the elevator, usually with his nurse, once with an attractive woman, evidently his mother, in a mink coat. Frances loved children, and always noticed them. She took his hand.

"We'll go find your nurse."

Frances led him in the direction from which he had come, looking vainly about for his nurse, but the woman was nowhere in sight. Giving up the hunt, at last, Frances bought him an ice-cream cone, and took him in a taxi to the Aldorff. When she asked the uniformed starter at the main entrance if he knew the child's identity, he nodded.

"Sure. That's Mrs. Wallace's kid. I see him go out with his nurse every morning. They live on the twenty-fourth floor."

Frances thanked him and took the child inside, and rode up in the elevator. She rang the apartment bell, and the pretty woman she had seen in the elevator herself opened the door. The little boy rushed at her, hugging her around the knees. "Hello, Billy! What does this mean." She looked at Frances in surprise. "Has anything happened to Nora?"

"Your little boy got separated from his nurse in the park, evidently," said Frances, and told his mother exactly what had happened. "It was by the sheerest coincidence that I remembered having seen him in my hotel."

Mrs. Wallace, both upset and relieved, thanked Frances effusively.

"I'm so grateful to you! I should have been simply sick with fright, if I had known that Billy was lost. We've always been afraid of kidnapers, anyway. That *Nora!*" She held out her hand, as Frances made as if to go. "Won't you tell me your name, please? My husband arrives from the Coast very soon. He'll want to thank you, personally."

"I'm Frances Brown, and I'm on the eighteenth floor. But do tell Mr. Wallace not to bother. It was a pleasure to bring Billy home and to make his acquaintance. I love children. Maybe we can go for a walk ourselves, sometime—Billy and I."

The child's mother thanked her again, and Frances left, feeling the little warm glow one always does at performing a good deed.

By the time she reached her own suite, however, she forgot all about it, for there was a telegram lying on her desk. Picking it up, she saw that it had been apparently left at her own apartment, and had been brought here to the hotel by Larry's agency messenger, with her other mail. She hurriedly ripped it open. It was a night-letter, sent the day before.

DARLING ARRIVING LATE THURSDAY STAYING HOTEL ADMIRAL OVERNIGHT

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ONLY IMPERATIVE MUST SEE YOU EARLIEST ALL MY LOVE

BOB

Frances stared at the wire, transfixed. Her instinct told her instantly, why Bob was coming to town. He had been hinting about it in his last letters. He probably wanted her to give up her idea of a career year in New York, and to marry him immediately. Probably he had gotten the raise, at last, that his father had promised him. She knew, intuitively, that a moment of decision was at hand—perhaps the most important of her life.

Thursday was tomorrow. She would have to face Bob tomorrow, and give him an answer, one way or the other. He had a sort of stubbornness of his own, and a pride. If she turned him down definitely—if she was unable to hold him off any longer—he almost certainly would never ask her again. Elaine Boyd, back home, who had been setting her cap for him for years, would probably see to that on his return, a man with a bruised ego on the rebound.

LIMPLY Frances sat down, balling the telegram in her hand. If she had never met Larry, she saw with sudden clarity, there was little doubt as to what her answer would be, to Bob, if he insisted on a definite one. She loved New York, but dwelling alone in a strange city on a barely livable income wasn't all it was cracked up to be. Every unmarried girl she met in Manhattan, seemed to be looking for a husband, seeking escape from a routine job and a drab one-room apartment that often enough she perforce shared with someone else.

Even if Frances knew Bob too well for him to thrill her, at least he was kind, had an excellent job, and some day would inherit a large business. Then he could give her a beautiful home, a position in the community, and love as well as security. And she was deeply fond of him. In fact, until she has met Larry Harwood, that is, she had thought that she loved him.

Larry, himself, telephoned just then, to tell her that he had tickets for a musical comedy that night, and that she had hit two gossip columns in the afternoon papers. In the items Monica Lindgaard was definitely said to be stopping at the Aldorff under the name of Frances Brown.

"Everything's working out fine," he went on. "That is to say, except for the little thing. Our people in London still haven't been able to trace Lindgaard. For all I know, she may have come over steerage in the *Queen*. And here's Art Clark dying to get her signed up with Techro Pictures, and me, with a fat contract, waiting for her to sign with Cosmos. Yet neither of us really can do anything." He sighed, heavily. "I hope the office doesn't end up regretting our investment in you. It was my idea, you know. By the way, anything new, your end?"

Frances hesitated, then told him about the telegram from Bob Willard. He whistled, apprehensively.

"You're not going to see him, are you? If you do, are you sure you can trust him enough to confide what we're doing? Don't forget we've got an expensive investment in you, already. If the truth gets out around town, about what I've been pulling, with you, it might cost me my job. The Agency might have to disclaim me."

Frances was troubled.

"I don't exactly like to tell Bob. He wouldn't approve of the whole thing. Anyway, I've got an idea he's going to ask me to go back home with him. You see, he wants to marry me."

There was a moment's silence at the other end of the wire. When Larry spoke, his voice was strained.

"You're not going to go away and let us down, at this point in the game? You wouldn't do that to me, would you, Fran?"

Frances sighed soundlessly. Larry's only concern, apparently, was for his hoped-for deal with Lindgaard.

"No, I wouldn't do that," she reassured him.

"Don't answer the wire," he urged. Let him think, as your florist boss does, that you're out of town, that you didn't get the wire." His voice grew more cheerful. "Just ignore it. That's the only thing you can do, under the circumstances. . . . Well, we'll talk it over to-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

night. 'By, for now. If only that darned cable I want would get here!" He hung up.

He did not mention it to her, when he called to take her to the theatre, however. He had been tied up in a conference, and had had to phone and tell her to dine alone. As they arrived, at the theatre, and were going down to their second-row seats, Frances suddenly caught sight of Mrs. Wallace, whose little lost boy she had brought home, smiling warmly at her, and nodding, from among the audience. Frances smiled back. Larry, behind her, did not see the interchange.

Several times during the show, Frances stole sidewise glances at Larry, catching him watching her with an odd expression upon his face. Each time he looked quickly away. She wondered what he was thinking about; his behavior all evening, she realized, was different from what it had ever been before. Could he be jealous?

THEY went to *El Kasbah,* the famous nightclub-restaurant after the show, and ordered supper. Larry was still unwontedly subdued and thoughtful.

"Are you really serious about maybe marrying this fellow from back home?" he asked, finally.

"I don't quite know, to tell you the truth," said Frances, after a moment. "I'm awfully fond of Bob. For a long time I was certain I would marry him some day. In fact, he still thinks that we're sort of unofficially engaged. I'll have to see him again, to make up my mind, I suppose. I owe it to Bob."

A flash-bulb flashed in their faces, and a roaming photographer grinned at them, over his camera.

"Thank you, Miss Lindgaard," said he. "Thank *you,* Mr. Harwood." He drifted quickly away.

Larry half rose as if to go after him, then subsided, with a shrug. He had other things on his mind, just now, than his business schemes.

"Then you're going to see him tomorrow? Even if I ask you to pretend you're out of town and not see him? As a personal favor to me?"

"I'm sorry, Larry, but I have to. I can't play Bob a trick like that, when he's come so far to see me for just one night." She attempted a laugh. "After all, I've known Bob for years. And I've only known *you* barely four days."

"Sometimes," said Larry, not looking at her, "four days and nights can be four lifetimes. Particularly the way we've been seeing each other, practically morning, noon, and night. I feel as if I've always known you. I felt that way from the very first day I met you, if you must know. It was like a—a recognition."

"I'm glad to hear you say that," said Frances, softly. "For I've felt that way about us, too. From the first."

"It's not fair for you to see him and maybe give him an answer, tomorrow, when he's had so much of all the years he's been courting you!" he exclaimed, almost savagely.

Delight bubbled in her heart like quicksilver. Larry was jealous—perhaps really falling in love with her, even if he wouldn't yet admit it to himself. Larry, the man of the world, the cynic, the cautious bachelor, who didn't want to be rushed.

"I'm sorry, Larry. But I'll have to see Bob tomorrow, under the circumstances."

Her voice was regretful.

"If *that's* the way you feel about it, then!" said he, and imperiously summoned the waiter, and asked for the check. He added, while he waited for the check: "He did promise you a year in New York, to make up your mind, didn't he?"

"Yes, he did," she agreed, remembering that fact with some relief.

"*Well,* then!" said Larry expressively. She said nothing, but smiled. He went on: "All right, go ahead and keep your date with him. But don't forget you're still working for ITA—and Larry Harwood. And for heaven's sake don't go anywhere with him where someone who's seen us together may recognize you. There's too much at stake, for everything to get balled-up, now." He looked at her, almost defiantly. "I need the bonus, frankly, that landing Lindgaard for ITA would get me. I've got plans shaping up, for that bonus."

"I'll be careful," Frances promised quietly.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHAPTER IV

An Ultimatum

WHEN Larry took her home, that night, he went up to her very door, to say good night. The hotel corridor was deserted.

"I'm warning you in advance that I'm going to kiss you good night," said Larry. "Scream for the house detective, if you want to, but I'm going to kiss you, just the same. You won't catch me letting you date that guy again—whom you've already kissed heaven knows how many times—without giving you a Harwood sample!"

Frances smiled at him, he was so very tall and masterful and boyish, all at once.

"I wouldn't dream of screaming and waking up all the guests at this time of night," she murmured.

He took her almost fiercely into his arms, and his mouth sought hers, hungrily. The contact sent little shivers down her spine, made her go deliciously weak in the knees. Her arm slid round his neck, and they were close together, as their lips clung. It was a kiss to remember, when she was an old lady!

Larry let her go suddenly, almost roughly.

"Now you can go to bed," said he, gruffly. "Good night!" He turned, then, and stalked toward the elevators, down the corridor.

It was a long time before Frances fell asleep that night. . . .

Larry did not call the next morning, however, as he had always done before, nor was there a word from him by lunchtime. Whether he was sulking, displeased, or merely being indifferent, Frances could not tell. At any rate, his silence, and her lonely luncheon, after the gay, public ones that had preceded it, depressed her. Despite the luxury of her hotel suite, despite her smart new suit and accessories, despite all her borrowed glamour, Frances suddenly felt more than ever the little nobody who worked in a florist's shop.

She hung around the suite, moping, until the middle of the afternoon, then still having heard no word from Larry, she could stand the loneliness and her thoughts no longer, and went to a movie. But she could hardly concentrate on the screen before her. All the happy, triumphant thoughts she had hugged to herself before retiring the night before, all the glowing memories of Larry's ardent good night kiss, went sour in her heart.

What was a kiss to a man who knew and had doubtless kissed so many beautiful women? What was she, after all, to a successful man with such an exciting, full life? Why had she been fool enough to think that she had somehow miraculously bridged the gulf between them? In her disappointment and depression, even her usual fierce pride was unable to cope with her mood.

When she left the movie, late in the afternoon, she telephoned the Aldorff. There were no messages of any kind for her. She hung up, more disappointed than she cared to admit, and went to the Hotel Admiral to wait for Bob's arrival. She killed another three-quarters of an hour in the hotel tea-shop. This time, she resolutely thought mostly about Bob. She was certain, in her heart, that he was coming to propose to her again—to give her an ultimatum. She had really believed, from the beginning, that he would be patient enough to wait out the full year she had demanded. Well, what was she going to tell him?

By the time Frances eventually paid her check, and went up to the desk to inquire if Bob had arrived yet and found her message, her mind was almost made up.

If Bob asked her to marry him, and go back home with him, she would think a long time before she said no.

Bob had registered, she was informed, nearly a half hour before. She hurriedly called his room. It was nearly seven o'clock.

"Fran? Where are you? I found your message but didn't know where to reach you." The old familiar voice was like the voice of home, the voice of reassurance. But was there an unaccustomed note in it?

"I'm downstairs, in the lobby. I've

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been waiting around for you for nearly an hour."

"I'll be right down!" he promised.

SOME ten minutes later, Frances watched Bob leave the elevator, and stand, for a moment, looking for her—the same tall, sternly handsome Bob she had always known—with his faintly receding hair, firm mouth like his banker father's. His decorous spectacles made him look a little older and primmer than he really was. Maybe he was no glamour boy like Larry, she told herself—maybe he didn't know his way around cafe society and among the celebrities of the world—but he represented everything that was solid and safe and reassuring. He was hers! A wave of tenderness went over her, of possessiveness.

"Bob! Here I am!"

He saw her standing there in the little alcove across the lobby, and came rapidly toward her, with his deliberate, unhurried stride. She came rushing halfway to meet him, to receive his welcoming kiss.

Bob did not take her in his arms, however. His kiss, to her surprise, was less than warm. She looked at him.

"What's the matter, Bob? Aren't you glad to see me?" She noticed for the first time, that he was angry.

"That depends," said he, stiffly. He took her arm and led her back into the alcove, which was like a quiet eddy off the main stream of the lobby's activity. "I want to ask you something, first, Frances."

"What is it?" She was genuinely puzzled.

He took a folded newspaper from the side pocket of his jacket. It was an afternoon paper that specialized in syndicated gossip columns, and which printed many pictures glorifying cafe society. He jerked it open, and pointed accusingly at a photograph in the upper right-hand corner.

"You might look at that," said he, accusingly. "And explain it, if you can!"

Frances gasped. There was the picture taken of her and Larry at El Cairo, the night before, in the midst of their absorbed discussion, over their supper.

"And who might Monica Lindgaard be?" Bob went on acidly. "Why does the paper call you by that name? Or have you a double, by any chance?" His voice was sarcastic.

Frances quickly scanned the identifying line under the picture:

Monica Lindgaard, famed Danish actress, supping tete-a-tete at El Cairo with her agent, Larry Harwood.

"It's I," she admitted. And suddenly remembered back to the smirking photographer's "Thank you, Miss Lindgaard." Her color heightened, unaccountably. "I can explain it, of course. I—I only hope you'll understand."

"Go ahead," said Bob, inexorably. "It looks to me as if it's going to take some tall explaining."

"I'll have to start from the very beginning," said Frances, slowly. She did, telling the story of what had happened to date, in detail—with reservations, of course, as to her personal relations with Larry. "And that's exactly what happened, Bob. I know it sounds fantastic, and all that, but such things happen every day in the entertainment business, I understand."

Bob had listened with an ever-deepening scowl. His face was youthfully hard and grim, as she finished.

"I never heard of anything so low-principled and undignified!" he suddenly burst out. "Pretending publicly to be someone else—and an important woman, at that. Letting this man buy you clothes, and pay for keeping you at an expensive hotel. Throwing your reputation to the winds! How could you ever *think* of doing such a thing!"

"But you don't understand!" she exclaimed, taken aback by his fury.

"I understand that you're not the girl I've always thought you were!" he told her hotly. "A girl who lets her real name get in common gossip columns—who publicly proclaims herself a fake—who thinks so little of the standing and reputation of the man who wants her to bear his name, that she's willing to—to—" He choked, with feeling.

Frances looked at him, appalled.

"Is that what you really think of me?"

"What else can you expect me to think?" he demanded, bitterly. "And how do you think I feel, knowing there's always the probability that this will get

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

back home to the family, to our friends?"

FRANCES took a deep breath and stared at him.

"Maybe I made a mistake," she said. "But I've done nothing really wrong. If you loved me—"

"I suppose you're going to say that if I loved you, I'd insist that we get married right away, so as to scotch once and for all what harm may have been done." His voice held the aggrieved note of the martyr. "I don't say that that mightn't be the wise thing to do, under the circumstances—to give you the protection of my name, before worse notoriety comes of this. On the other hand, it may be wiser to wait the full year out which we originally intended, until this thing has had a chance to die down and be forgotten. Then—"

"Neither alternative will be necessary, as it happens," Frances, cut in on him sharply. All in a moment, it seemed, she had had a blinding flash of revelation. Instead of sympathy and understanding from the man she thought loved her, she had only received complaint and censure. And receiving it, had seen what he really was, what his love was, what the life he could offer her, could only be. She rose. "Believe it or not, I'm glad this has all happened, Bob. It's made me realize what I've known in my heart all along, but didn't have the courage to admit—that we're wrong for each other."

"Hold on!" exclaimed Bob, alarmed. "I—"

"It's no use," said she. "Good-by, and and good luck. And don't make yourself ridiculous running after me!" she warned, to make sure that Bob, whose sensitiveness she knew so well, would not try to hold her. She turned, quickly, then, and hurried across the lobby to the revolving door, and outside.

An empty cab was just about to pull away from the curb. Frances dashed across the sidewalk, hopped in, and gave the address of Aldorff. Even as the cab darted into the stream of traffic, looking back, she saw Bob emerge upon the sidewalk, hatless, and stand there, angry and bewildered, looking around for her. He had not seen her mode of leaving.

Frances sank back on the seat, and a vast relief came over her. She knew, in that instant, that in her heart, she had never really wanted to marry Bob. Now she was glad that circumstances had cut the Gordian knot for her at a stroke. With his bruised ego, she thought, Bob would hardly come after her to try to get her to change her mind—just yet, at any rate. Then she thought of Larry—and the despondent mood that had gripped her all afternoon, returned with a sickening rush. Now she had exactly nothing . . . She stared ahead, her eyes bleak. Well, there was at least one thing she could do. She'd pack her own clothes, her original clothes, and leave the Aldorff that very night. She'd go back to her one-room flat, and to her job. She'd make a new life for herself, out of the broken illusions of the old one.

CHAPTER V

ANGRY ACTRESS

FRANCES arrived at the hotel, and went up to her suite. Even as she unlocked the outer door, she heard the telephone ringing. She walked across to it deliberately: it was probably Bob, trying to make up—trying to get her to meet him again, to further talk things over.

"Hello?" Her voice was dulled.

"Hello, Frances?" It was Larry's voice, not Bob's.

"Yes, Larry!" Her spirits zoomed. "I just this minute came in. How are you?" So Larry had been unable to hold out any longer, either! Her heart sang, as she mentally blessed Bob for the way he had acted, enabling her to come back home.

"I'm lower than the foot-pad of a caterpillar, if you must know," said Larry.

His voice, she suddenly realized was heavy with gloom.

"What's the matter?" She thought instantly of the newspaper picture.

"Everything's the matter—all of it bad. To make it brief, Monica Lind-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gaard arrived today by air at La-Guardia."

"No!" gasped Frances.

"Yep, and she's right there at the Aldorff, where you are. What's more, she's seen the picture of us in the afternoon paper and has been told of the stunt I pulled. She's furious with me—so much so, that she won't even talk to me on the telephone. To make it worse, I've just run into Art Clark, who gloated all over the place. He's reached her, somehow—adding gasoline to the fire about me, you can be sure—and he has a date to talk business with her, in the morning. He told me so, himself. So that's that!" There was a world of bitterness in his voice.

"Oh, *Larry!*" She could have wept for him. "I'm so sorry!"

"Skip it!" She heard a muted bell ring, over the wire. "There's my other phone, with my call from the Coast, I imagine. I'll call you back, in a few minutes. 'By!" He hung up.

Frances put down the phone. Hardly had she done so, than it rang again. She picked it back up.

"Miss Brown?" It was a woman's voice.

"Yes?"

"This is Inez Wallace—Billy's mother."

"How do you do, Mrs. Wallace?"

"My husband is here. He's just got in from the Coast. He insists on coming down to your apartment and thanking you personally for bringing Billy home when he got lost, the other day. May he?"

"Certainly," said Frances, mechanically, before she thought.

"He'll be right down. It's only for a moment. We're going out to dinner." Mrs. Wallace hung up.

Frances hesitated, about to call back and tell him not to come, then shrugged. Why not? She would never see them again, anyway.

Five minutes later, the doorbell rang. She opened it, and a stout, baldish, middle-aged man with vaguely familiar-looking features smiled at her.

"I'm Stanley Wallace," said he. "May I come in?"

She gave him her hand, and ushered him inside. He shook hands cordially, his eyes fixed on her face.

"I don't know how to thank you enough, for bringing Billy home. I guess my wife told you, I'm pretty soft about that little son of mine."

"It was a pleasure, Mr. Wallace. He's a dear little boy. I enjoyed meeting him."

"I've always been afraid of kidnapers. I don't mind telling you, if someone had kidnaped him, I'd have gladly given a million dollars to get him back. Now you know how I feel about him—and how much I appreciate what you did."

"I'm sure every parent would give a million dollars for his child, if he had it," said she, unthinking. Her mind was still on Larry and his problems.

Wallace gave her an odd look.

"I honestly believe you don't really know who I am, do you?"

"Why, no, Mr. Wallace, I don't," said Frances. "Does it make any difference?"

HE GAVE a booming laugh. "I only made that remark, Miss Lindgaard, because I only just found out who *you* are." He chuckled. "You may have heard of me, even in Europe. I'm S. B. Wallace, of Interallied Pictures."

Frances could hardly believe her ears. Interallied was the largest, richest studio in Hollywood, and the famous "S.B.," its president, was one of the greatest single powers in the industry. She swallowed hard.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Wallace, that I didn't recognize you. But first, you ought to know that I'm not—"

He held up an imperious hand.

"Please let me talk for a moment, Miss Lindgaard as I've only a few minutes to spare. First of all, I'm delighted to learn you've come to America at last, and that you've apparently changed your mind about not making pictures here. I don't know who your agent is, or what commitments he's made, if any, but Interallied would be honored to have you join our roster of stars, in any case, if you were interested."

She made as if to interrupt, and again he stopped her.

"Hear me out, Miss Lindgaard, before you say anything," he went on rapidly. "You've done me a great personal favor, all the more appreciated because you did

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it without knowing whose son Billy was. I want to do something for you in return. I know that other studios in Hollywood would be willing to give you satisfactory offers. Well, I'll not only top, financially, any other offer you get—in other words, you can write your own ticket—but I'll do more. It's something I'd do for you personally, only in token of my appreciation for Billy. We own the best-selling novel *Forever And Ever*, the biggest picture property of the decade. Every woman star on our lot is fighting to get the leading role, *Ada Beam*, and, naturally, for it's a terrific one. Well, if you sign with us, Miss Lindgaard, I'll give it to you. It'll make you the biggest woman star in the world, overnight." He beamed at her. "What do you say?"

Frances drew a long breath. Even as she had listened, a desperate inspiration had come to her. Fate had sent S. B. Wallace to her, just now.

"I'd consider it, on one condition, Mr. Wallace."

"What's that?"

"That if I make any deal with your studio, you'll only deal through an agent named Larry Harwood, of the International Talent Agency."

He shrugged, puzzled, but indifferent.

"I'll deal with anyone you say. But is it a deal? Will you sign with us?"

"I—I have to talk to Mr. Harwood, first, if you don't mind, Mr. Wallace. If a—a definite commitment has already been made for Monica Lindgaard with another studio, it may be too late. But I hope it hasn't."

"I like your honesty, Miss Lindgaard. Well, I'll wait to hear from Harwood. In the meantime, I must dash. I hope you'll dine with us, soon, incidentally."

"Thank you. It would be a pleasure."

Frances could hardly wait until the door had closed behind the departing movie mogul, when she rushed to telephone Larry. His secretary answered.

"Mr. Harwood is on another line, talking long distance to California," she reported. "Will you wait?"

"No. Tell him that Miss Brown called, and that he's to come to her apartment at the Aldorff right away—that it's an emergency!" She hung up. Then got the hotel operator again. "Give me Miss Monica Lindgaard's apartment, please."

A few moments later a slightly foreign voice answered.

"Miss Lindgaard?" asked Frances.

"No. Zis is her maid. Who is calling, please?"

"Miss Frances Brown. Please say it's very important." Her voice took on urgency. "A matter of life and death."

THE maid went away. A minute or two later, another voice came to the phone. A cold, hostile voice.

"This is Monica Lindgaard."

"Miss Lindgaard, I'm Frances Brown. I'm living right here in the hotel. May I see you alone, in your apartment, for just a few minutes, please? It's desperately important."

"I have heard all about you, Miss Brown," said the feminine voice, icy with distaste. "I have no desire to meet you, now or ever."

"Please, Miss Lindgaard, I know exactly how you feel, but this is a matter that vitally concerns you, yourself. If you refuse to see me now, you'll regret it all your life! Please believe me!"

The actress hesitated, then replied: "Very well, then. You may come up. It's Apartment Forty-M." She hung up.

Ten minutes later, Frances was ringing the doorbell of 40-M. She was tight with apprehension and excitement, with desperation. She had to bring this about, for Larry's sake.

Another minute, and she had the odd experience of staring into what were almost her own exact features, in the face of another woman. The Danish actress, equally curious, and surprised, was the first to speak.

"It is incredible," said she, with a slight accent. "How much we resemble each other! I'm not quite so thin as you, nor is my hair the same shade, nor my eyes so widely spaced, but—it's simply amazing. Tell me—have you Scandinavian blood?"

Frances nodded. "My grandmother was Swedish. Her name was Jorgensson," said she. "Christina Jorgensson. Her people came from Malmo."

The real Lindgaard gasped.

"But this is a miracle! My great-aunt Christina was married to a Swede, named Jorgensson. And they lived in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Malmo. Why, we're distantly related! No wonder we've both inherited the same resemblance!"

"The resemblance, but not the talent," said Frances, diplomatically.

"Thank you." Then her features hardened. "But kin or no kin, you had no right to pretend to be me—to help some adventurer of an agent."

"Listen!" begged Frances, desperately. "Hear me out, from the beginning. Then maybe you'll understand, and forgive us both." Without giving the other woman a chance to refuse, she plunged into her story, painting Larry in as sympathetic and complimentary a light as possible, and brought it up to date—without mentioning, yet, her interview with the movie mogul. "So, you see, you can't blame him for doing everything possible to keep competitors from reaching you, until he had the chance to make his own offer, first."

"I'm sorry, but I don't approve of such chicanery," said the actress. "Anyway, I've more or less promised to allow another agency to handle me. Their Mr. Clark is calling to discuss it with me, tomorrow. They have a wonderful role for me—a fine play. The vehicle is more important to me than money."

"If your vehicle is so important, then, you can't afford to refuse to talk to Larry Harwood first," she told the star. "Why? Because he's the only agent in America who can give you the novel *Forever and Ever*, the role of *Ada Beam*, and an Interallied contract at any terms you care to name. Now, will you see him, tonight—or won't you?"

Three hours had passed. It was done, incredibly. The two of them were back in Frances' suite, hardly able to realize what had happened. How Frances had first met Larry, told him about Bob, then briefed him, and taken him up to meet Monica Lindgaard. How she had agreed to sign with him, personally, if he got her the coveted role. How he had reached the great S. B. Wallace on the phone, in her presence, and cinched the deal. How the Danish actress had softened completely, then, and ordered champagne to celebrate both the new deal, all around, and her discovery of a new kinswoman. And how, in the end, Frances had confided in her all the truth, about her final pretense of being Lindgaard, with the producer—and how the real Lindgaard forgiving her, had laughed and laughed. . . .

"Lindgaard says you've inherited the family talent, too," Larry was saying. "She says there's no reason why I shouldn't make a career for you, too."

"I don't want a career," said Frances.

"She said I ought to sign you up anyway, before you got away," he went on. "That was the last thing she whispered to me, before we left her apartment." He took her in his arms. "And I think it's a swell idea. About signing you. What do *you* think?"

"A seven-year-contract?" she asked.

"With options," said Larry, "for life. Definitely a life contract. I can afford to be an independent guy, now that I've got Lindgaard on my list. It's life or nothing for us, honey." He held her very close, then, very tenderly. "Say you will. Please. Before you change your mind."

"I'll never change my mind," said Frances, contentedly. And raised her lips. "Never!"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"You do love me, Sharon?" Kent asked gently

Cleavage

By LILLIAN KAY MORNINGSTAR

SHARON RICE looked over her Martini, her heavy-lashed gray eyes meeting Kent's brown ones reflectively. Honest eyes, Kent's were, and heart-warming. She brought herself back sharply. Remember Jerry Carter, she told herself. You couldn't tell. You were too much the sum of all

Sharon Rice was afraid to let true love enter her life!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that happened to you. And when so much had happened, you couldn't make yourself over in a minute. Certainly you couldn't go forth, arms outflung to meet life, with your heart in one hand and your dreams in the other.

"It's not really that I'm afraid, Kent," Sharon said slowly. "But I have my work—" She paused, thinking of her work, her job that had absorbed her for four years, since she was twenty.

How many women of that age could step into the management of a broadcasting studio and run it with an efficiency that put all scepticism to rout? In her work, she could be sure, she could know she was right. It was only in her judgment about men, about—yes, about love, that she couldn't trust herself.

She fought to get back the old thrill of accomplishment, the satisfied feeling of competence in her work, but it had deserted her.

Kent shook his head and smiled briefly. "Your work. Compensation, Sharon. All that drive! It isn't natural in a woman."

"It's not compensation," Sharon said angrily. "I had the ability to start with or I couldn't have done it."

"I'm not questioning the ability, Sharon," Kent answered gently. "But—you do love me?"

"It won't work out," Sharon said swiftly. She drew a deep breath, and plunged in. "It didn't work out with my mother, nor with my sister Janet. There's something wrong with us. We —we're never sure of ourselves. It runs in the family, like the Jukes and Kalikaks. I—" She hesitated, lifting her glass, twisting the stem in her slender fingers, watching the light against it. She added slowly, "I shouldn't want to have a little girl, sometime, and have her go through what I went through."

She shivered slightly, and Kent's firm hand, closing over her small, cold one on the table, didn't warm her now.

KENT, squaring his shoulders, answered stubbornly, "You can't say that. You aren't Janet. Definitely, you aren't your mother. You're Sharon. And you *are* different. When your mother broke up her home, she didn't hesitate, even though it meant leaving her family. Nor did Janet, under the same circumstances. You, who have every right to marry if you wish, are hesitating. And believe me, it isn't because of your job. It's because of a mental block. It's bad for you, Sharon, not to see it and admit it for what it is."

Sharon listened, but she wasn't comforted. Even if she admitted Kent was right, all the uncertainty, the fierce loyalty to her mother and to Janet, were still there. She had lived with these ideas too long. They had become a crust over her consciousness. She had accepted too finally the fact that she was one with her mother and her sister. Fighting the acceptance had hurt too much.

Simply accepting it had been a way out, had represented a reason for every emotional experience that had happened to her or to her mother or to Janet. To say, "Oh, we just can't ever be sure about things like that, we're made that way"—that was what explained life's perplexities and caused it to fall neatly into place.

But you couldn't say that to a man like Kent. He wouldn't accept it. He argued. Sharon hadn't counted on falling in love with Kent. She wasn't equal to it. And yes, better admit it, she *was* afraid. Afraid of hurting Kent as her father had been hurt.

Sharon drew her fox scarf over her shoulders and picked up her gloves. She looked at Kent, taking in with quick longing his square shoulders in the gray business suit, the troubled look on his nice, ordinary face, the tender half-smile playing about his fine, sensitive lips.

She said, "We'll talk about it tonight, Kent. I want a few hours to think. One way or another, I'll battle it out with myself. . . ."

Back in her apartment, Sharon touched a match to the logs in the small fireplace, and pulled the wing chair up in front of it. The two girls with whom she shared the apartment were away for the week end. It might be the last chance for a fire before fall, although April had been obligingly cool.

She had told Ken she would battle

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it out with herself. Yet now, in the stillness, there was nothing to battle. It was so vague. Nothing but the feeling that she was unstable so far as love and marriage were concerned.

Nothing but memories. Like the Christmas Eve when her mother had calmly walked out with the man they called Uncle Chris, for good. Clearly, as though it were yesterday, Sharon could see her father taking Janet and her to a restaurant for a turkey dinner, and after, to a show.

None of them talked about her mother, but Sharon remembered her father's gray eyes, and how he kept running his hand awkwardly through his crisp, graying hair. She remembered that he looked so big and that his suit was crumpled and needed pressing. Most of all she remembered how he tried to make Christmas mean something to them. Yet all the time she kept feeling sorry for him Sharon felt also the need to defend her mother. It was necessary for her to feel that there was a reason for what had happened, something her mother couldn't help, other than that her mother simply didn't love them nor care anything about them.

Their life after that Christmas was unbelievably confused. A month after her mother left, Berta, who had run the house for years, told Mr. Rice she was leaving.

"Folks are talking," Berta said. Her kind red face looked woeful under the tight braids of faded golden hair. "I—I can't take the responsibility for Janet." Berta gave a quick look at Sharon and closed her lips tightly.

Her father tried to argue with Berta, but it was no use. He made a final, helpless gesture, picking up his paper, giving it a shake, and sitting down to read. Berta looked at him for a minute, tears swimming in her eyes, before she went back to the kitchen. But the next day she was gone.

Sharon had been angry with Berta for leaving the brunt of the work on Janet's shoulders. Sharon's fourteen-year old affection had centered itself, after her mother had gone, on her older sister. Beautiful, dark-eyed, merry Janet, seventeen then, whose warmth and love of life spilled over lavishly to include her young sister Sharon.

Together they struggled with the housework, because help was unobtainable. Janet's energy, her unbounded enthusiasm for anything she undertook, made the mountain of work seem like a game. More and more, Sharon was sure that Janet was little short of perfection.

But her father wasn't satisfied. He and Janet quarreled constantly. Sharon, in her room, could hear their voices, but she didn't gather what it was all about, except that Janet had too many boy friends. This didn't seem surprising or very bad to Sharon, although she realized the house was always quite noisy with Janet's gang around.

Once, she did overhear her father say in a terrible voice, "I will not, Janet, ever again, go through what I went through with your mother."

Remembering her mother, warm, sweet, merry, and so like Janet, Sharon came close to hating her father.

THE tight, closely-knit Southern town where they lived wasn't very big, and when the scandal about her mother broke, Sharon had gone through a bad time at school. Dorrie Harris, Sharon's girl friend, began avoiding her. Sharon couldn't understand it, so one day she asked Dorrie what she was mad at her about. Sharon could still see Dorrie's sweet, anxious little face twist into worried lines.

"Mother says if—if people think it's all right what—well, what your mother did," Dorrie said, blushing, "why then it might sort of happen to—to anyone's mother or father. She says something about blood will tell, or something—it's awfully silly, Sharon. And I'm sorry, but mother wants me to play with respectable children. Not around where Janet is—or even you."

Sharon ran home fast as she could, crying until she felt sick and achy all over. Until then, what her mother had done hadn't seemed connected with her. Now, it appeared, she was part of her mother and of Janet. So she dried her tears and took a fierce joy in the thought. If she were like Janet, it was all right. She was proud of it, and she could do without Dorrie.

When she was sixteen, Sharon had

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the experience with Jerry Carter. Jerry was always around, visiting Janet, and Sharon thought him wonderful. He paid a lot of attention to her, too, in a careless, superior sort of way, kidding her, complimenting her, going out of his way to be nice to her.

"Don't take him seriously, Sharon," Janet warned her. "Jerry's a knock-out for looks, but he's an utter heel. Utter, that is."

But at sixteen you don't take a warning like that seriously. Sharon fell hard for the smoldering, reckless look in Jerry's eyes. She wove a lot of what seemed now to be rather silly romantic fancies around him. She thought she was in love with him.

So that night, when she had gone to the Community Club dance, and Janet was busy somewhere else, Sharon danced every dance with Jerry.

She felt like an Aurora with golden wings, trailing her fluffy robe across a rainbow bridge.

When they danced, Jerry held her too close, drawing her up to him so he could put his cheek against hers. He didn't make the breaks in the music when he should. Sharon was terrified for fear people would talk, or someone would come up and ask them to leave the floor. But neither of these things happened, and so Sharon thought it was quite thrilling. She thought he loved her so much he wanted to be as close to her as he could.

On the way home, Jerry drove out the river road, parking close to the river so the water almost lapped the tires. He sat looking at her a second, then he swept her into his arms and kissed her.

Whatever Sharon expected, it was not that sort of kiss. She hated everything about it. Shocked and disgusted, she kept pulling away from him, telling him to stop. But he wouldn't. A cold fury swept her, and she reached up and slapped him as hard as she could.

Jerry stopped kissing her, staring at her owlishly.

"Okay, okay," he said shortly. "I thought you liked me. After the way your mother and Janet carry on, I didn't expect you to be fussy. And you certainly gave me every reason to think you wanted to be loved. After this, when you ask for something, be sure you want it, kid."

Sharon cried then, blindly, not caring. Jerry started the car, roaring back on the highway in a burst of speed. It was already late, but Jerry wouldn't go home. For hours, it seemed, he drove madly up one road and down another. Finally he stopped at a bar, ten miles from town.

Sharon got away then, walking home. It was broad daylight when she got there, and she met a good many people, who looked at her bedraggled white party dress in a stunned sort of way.

There was a terrible scene with her father. It was no use trying to explain anything to him.

"You're all alike," her father said. "Your mother, Janet, you. I thought you were different, Sharon, but you aren't. I don't even care to discuss it. I know from experience it would be like talking to the wind."

That was when the complete acceptance of herself as one with her mother and Janet took place. The three of them were alike. She saw so clearly how it had been with them. They had thought they were in love, as she had thought she was in love with Jerry. But they had found their mistake, as she had found hers. And the only thing you could do about that kind of mistake was to see it didn't happen again. Once you knew you couldn't trust your judgment about things like that, it was simple. You just avoided all thoughts of love.

SHARON had gone to the city after that, unable to bear the unfriendliness, the chill disapproval of people who once liked her. Her father gave her money for a business course. In order to forget her hurt, she threw herself into her work in a lasting, telling fury.

Not until she went to work at the radio station, which she now managed and which Kent Blair owned, did Sharon begin to be afraid. For months she kept a wall between herself and Kent, refusing to warm to his friendliness.

One day when she was putting on her hat to go home, Kent said abruptly, "Sharon do you hate everyone, or is it just me?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Startled and shaken, Sharon looked back at him coldly. "I don't hate anyone," she assured him.

"Oh, but you do!" The stubbornness she was to know so well, later, was in his voice. He leaned back in his chair, shoving an unruly lock of hair out of his eyes.

"You must have met some funny people," he observed, "to make you the way you are. Don't you know, my dear, that you can't crawl into a shell and dry up because you've had a few jolts? Everyone has 'em. Even me!" He grinned engagingly at her. "Why don't you just snap out of it?"

Anger swept her as she realized the pull of Kent's warmth. His friendliness, his interest, and something more, were drawing her to him like a leaf into a whirlpool. Hadn't she learned her lesson? Didn't she know that when you started to feel anything it meant you were going to get hurt? It would be the same thing over. She would be sure she loved him. Then she would find out she didn't. Sharon couldn't face the sympathy in his eyes.

Kent came over, standing before her, not touching her, just looking at her. Yet had he held her in his arms and kissed her, she could not have felt more terrifyingly the depth of his tenderness, the compelling pull of what he felt for her.

"It's dangerous to feel as you do, Sharon," he said softly. "Let me help you."

Sharon shook her head numbly, and Kent let her go. But that night, when he suddenly appeared at the apartment and asked her to come for a drive, she found herself unaccountably assenting. She was so terribly lonely, with the kind of loneliness she hadn't felt for a long time. It had been crowded down deep inside her. But Kent's words that afternoon had stirred the depths.

Kent took the car out Lake Drive. The sun made the water dance and sparkle. Far down, along the shore beyond the dunes, rose the October hills. Yellow and red, with great patches of deep, dark evergreens for contrast, the hills marched back from the blue lake. There was a smell of wood smoke. Sharon took off her hat and leaned back, letting the wind ruffle her dark curls.

She tried to keep the strange new peace, the new sense of security, from knocking her off balance. She was afraid Kent might try to kiss her. He didn't. After a while Sharon relaxed. Kent drove farther out to a little roadhouse for dinner, and they danced for an hour. But he still hadn't tried to make love to her. There seemed no point in being on the defensive! Astonished, Sharon realized, after she said goodnight to Kent, that the evening had been happy and soothing.

That was the beginning. From then on, Kent seemed to be always around. They went to shows, and concerts, finding they liked the same things.

Then, one day, without Kent's asking her, Sharon told him about her life. She even told him about Jerry. For a moment Kent sat quite still. Then he got up from the chair where he had been sitting, listening and staring into the fire.

He came over and stood before her for a second. Then reaching down, he took both her hands in his and drew her into his arms. All Sharon's defenses were down. As Kent's lips met hers, she knew it was what she wanted, what she had been waiting for. She put her arms tightly around his neck, pulling him closer.

It wasn't until later, thinking it over, that she knew it mustn't go on. Whatever came, she loved Kent too much to marry him and see what they had together turn into something of no moment. This, she was sure, would happen, as it had happened to her mother and to Janet. It would be far better to make a clean break now, than to go ahead and make a mess of their lives. . . .

Sharon stood up, stirring the embers in the fireplace. It was almost time for Kent to come, and she was right where she had been at six o'clock, when she left him. She hadn't battled anything out. All she knew was that her feeling was still the same.

She hurried into her bedroom and laid out her aqua dinner dress. She had finished her shower and swept her dark hair up into the high, simple coiffure that Kent liked when she heard his ring. After a moment she heard him come

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

into the living room. She slipped quickly into her dress. Already, thinking that perhaps this might be the last time with Kent, she felt a wave of loneliness.

Kent kissed her gently, holding her close for a brief second, then speaking quickly, as though to keep her from saying yet what was on her mind.

"I made reservations at the Palm Beach Club," he smiled, "There's a good floor show. Dogs. You like dogs, don't you?"

"Of course I like dogs." Sharon hesitated, not knowing why. It was like Kent not to rush her, or be eager, not to make her feel as though she were being pushed. "Isn't there an awful out-of-town jam at the Palm Beach?" she added.

"Could be. But this show—you'll love it. It's different." Kent held her coat for her, letting his hands linger gently on her shoulders a moment.

The Palm Beach, big and barnlike, was crowded and smoke-filled when they got there. Kent had a good table near the dance floor. He ordered Martinis and the steak supper. Sharon looked around idly, listening to the band give with "Rainy Night In Rio."

HER eyes drifted to the table next to them.

One of the three men at that table was Jerry Carter. An older and slightly heavier Jerry, but with the same reckless, smoldering look in his eyes which had once so fascinated her. He caught her glance and, after a moment of surprise, nodded to her. Then he was on his feet, coming toward them.

"Sharon Rice!" A mocking, hard-to-catalogue expression played about Jerry's lips, as Sharon stared up at him. "Whatever happened to you?" he asked.

Sharon felt weak in the pit of her stomach. She knew now why she had hesitated when Kent suggested the Palm Beach Club. It was the subconscious knowledge that this was the place where everyone from home came to celebrate, when they were in town.

With such calmness as she could muster, Sharon murmured, "Kent, this is Jerry Carter—from home. Jerry, Kent Blair." The two men shook hands, and commented on the weather. Then it came, as Sharon knew it was bound to!

Jerry said easily, "Mind if I ask Sharon to dance, Blair? Old school friends, home town stuff, all that—"

Sharon hated him, but even hating him, she knew she would dance with him. She would prove to herself and to him, that he was less than nothing in her life. As he was. She had a feeling that if she turned him down, he would go away chuckling to himself over her discomfiture.

She stood up shakily, letting Jerry lead her out onto the dance floor. His dancing seemed to have toned down a bit. He held her reasonably far away. Over his shoulder she could see Kent, his face rather white but without any expression she could read.

Jerry said with a short laugh, "I see you still think I'm something of a heel."

"Skip it," answered Sharon icily. "I've forgotten—everything."

Jerry held her away from him so he could look into her eyes. "No," he said with faint triumph, "you haven't forgotten. But I wasn't so much of a heel, really, as you thought. You must know that by now. Janet was a good egg. A darn good egg. I'd been out with her quite a few times. How was I to know you were different?"

Sharon struggled to get away from him. No matter how it looked or what he thought, she would dance with him no longer. But the floor was crowded, and now Jerry held her tightly.

"Don't be like this, Sharon," he said, "Don't stay mad forever. Look, I'll apologize. I'll admit you were just a kid, more innocent than I thought. Baffled maybe. But Janet—your mother—everybody in town knew about that. Janet—good egg, but she never used her head."

For the first time, Sharon realized Jerry had taken far too much to drink. She wrenched herself free, and for the second time in her life, she slapped him hard across the mouth. Scene or no scene, she must get away from him.

Stunned and sick, Sharon sat in the car by Kent on the way home. Kent held her close with one arm, but he made no comment. She would have given her life not to have heard what she had heard. Looking back, she knew Jerry

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had been telling the truth. A hundred small details she had been too blind or too innocent to see, came to her mind.

She had thought she was like Janet. But she wasn't like Janet. About her mother she refused to think. There had been two divorces since Uncle Chris. But her mind refused that hurdle. It was enough to admit where the line of cleavage between herself and Janet began. Janet was Janet, and she was Sharon, as Kent had said.

Cold clarity molded her thought, and with it came the complete separation of herself from Janet. She was Sharon, an individual. Not Janet's sister, not the daughter of a mother whose children meant less than nothing to her in the face of her desire. Just Sharon.

Along with the shame and bitterness came freedom, complete release from the thing she had feared.

Back in the apartment, Sharon sobbed quietly on Kent's shoulder.

After a while, Kent said gently, as though stating a fact, "You know now. I could have told you, Sharon. I guessed it from the first. But I couldn't tell you. It's not pleasant, darling, but you'll get over it. It's better to know things. Then you can face them."

"Yet you would have lost me, rather than set me right?"

Kent hesitated. "Yes," he said after a moment. "In the first place, you wouldn't have believed me, because you wouldn't let yourself see clearly. You would have hated me if I had tried to make you understand. Besides, I didn't have the facts, nothing but my knowledge of human nature. Children nowadays aren't ostracized for divorce. I knew there was something more. You're not afraid now, Sharon?"

"No," Sharon said, lifting her chin, her eyes shining. "I'm not afraid now. And for the first time in my life, I'm free. If you still want me, Kent, I'm yours. Without reservation."

Kent's eyes still held hers as he drew her close. Again Sharon felt the new sense of security flood through her and knew that now it belonged to her. Then, realizing how nearly it missed being like this, her arms tightened around Kent's shoulders.

FROM ROUNDHOUSE TO MAIN LINE

Carhartt OVERALLS

Have Been a Clear Track Favorite for Over 50 Years

No matter what your job—headender on a highliner, axe man in the woods, gandy dancer, lineman, farmer, millwright, mechanic, welder, carpenter, steelworker, dairyman, painter or mason—you'll like the easy fit, the comfort feel, the quality materials and superior tailoring of Carhartts. The Carhartt family have been making overalls for three generations. That's your guarantee of sounder values, higher quality and greater satisfaction. Look for the Car and Heart trademark. Insist on Carhartts.

HAMILTON CARHARTT OVERALL COMPANY
Established 1889
Detroit Atlanta Dallas Carhartt Park, Irvine, Ky.

MAKERS OF
Blue Denim, Brown Duck, White Sailcloth Overalls, Dungarees, Washable Work Caps

Carhartt UNION MADE OVERALLS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From Now On

By RUTH BROWN

Debutante Kee Barlowe wanted to write poetry—but first she had to learn the rhythm of life on an isolated ranch!

KEE BARLOWE'S hazel eyes were wide with disbelief as she faced Brigham Van Ness, her father's lawyer, in the library. Her mother was in the room, too, but her presence was hardly a positive contribution to the situation. In that moment Kee hated Brigham Van Ness almost as much as she hated his daughter, Elaine, and that was quite a lot.

"But it's all quite impossible, Mr. Van Ness," she heard herself declaring. "Neither mother nor I have ever lived anywhere but in San Francisco. Can't

"I suppose the boy friend will be here today?" he asked

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we just stay on here, at least until I'm married? I'm engaged to Larry Duncan, you know."

She hoped that last statement stung him. For years, Elaine Van Ness had fought tooth and toe nail to win Larry's love, but it was Kee who had won it.

"This house is mortgaged to the hilt," Mr. Van Ness said bluntly. "It will have to go on the market at once. What income you have wouldn't even pay taxes on it. On the other hand, this ranch property is entirely clear. No rent to pay—you could live on very little."

"It's impossible," Kee repeated again, this time with desperation in her voice.

It was inconceivable that she would have to leave the big Seacliff mansion which held everything dear to her, and go to live with her mother on an isolated ranch situated in some weird, unbelievable spot called Pacheco Pass. It was almost a hundred and fifty miles from the city—from her friends and clubs and all the things that were familiar to her. And a hundred and fifty miles from Larry.

"If either you or your mother had any way to earn money," Mr. Van Ness said, "it would be different. But as it is—"

"You used to write poetry, Kee," Mrs. Barlow put in eagerly. "I remember you had quite a flair for it when you were in college."

Kee gave her mother an indulgent look. Mrs. Barlowe had been a belle in a South Carolina town. Her hair was white, exquisitely waved and arranged, and her complexion was as fresh and rosy as a girl's. She had a great deal of charm, but a minimum of brains. Putting it bluntly, Kee thought, her mother was as helpless as a baby.

"Even good poets make very little money, Mother," she said. "And I'm not a good poet. I'm not even sure I'm a poet at all."

"You see?" Mr. Van Ness said drily, and spread his hands in a gesture of helplessness.

"I guess we'll have to do as Mr. Van Ness suggests, Kee," Mrs. Barlowe conceded. "What sort of house does it have? I mean, how many baths and all that? So we can begin to plan."

"I haven't seen it," the lawyer stated curtly. "I suppose there are adequate conveniences." On that note he left them.

"If there were any way for us to stay in San Francisco, Mr. Van Ness would make sure we didn't find it," Kee said listlessly. "He thinks that once I'm out of the way, Elaine can get Larry away from me."

"Oh, Kee, you're imagining things! Mr. Van Ness wasn't only your father's lawyer—he was his trusted friend, as well. And you and Larry have been engaged over a year, since before your father's death. Elaine just couldn't break up an engagement of such long standing, even if she were unethical enough to try."

Kee wasn't at all sure about that. Knowing Elaine, the lawyer's copper-haired daughter would certainly try, and quite possibly succeed.

"Besides," Mrs. Barlowe went on brightly, "when Larry hears about this change in our plans, undoubtedly he'll want to get married at once, and you won't have to go to this Whatever-it-is Pass."

But Larry, when Kee told him everything that evening, said nothing about getting married at once. He only whistled incredulously and said, "You actually mean that all of your old man's loot is gone? He must have been living up to the hilt for years."

"Yes," Kee confessed miserably, "I guess so."

Somehow Larry's words and tone offended her. She'd loved her father very much, and Larry's casualness seemed in a way, disrespectful. Only, of course, Larry didn't mean it that way. All the boys and girls in her set spoke like that. It was only a trend, a habit.

As far as her father's money went, that part of it couldn't possibly influence Larry. His own father owned a city-wide chain of restaurants. There was a Duncan's Corner House everywhere you went in San Francisco, and Larry had been working into the management end ever since he's been discharged from the service.

"Well, don't take it so hard, sweet," he told her now. "After all, a hundred and fifty miles isn't so far. I can drive down in three or four hours."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kee seized on this suggestion excitedly.

"Of course you can, darling! You'll come down every week-end, and I'll write to you every day, and we can telephone a couple of times a week—"

"Sure," Larry acquiesced easily. "It'll all work out just fine."

His gray eyes smiled at her, and Kee realized all over again how handsome he was and how much she loved him. Of course everything would be all right! If Larry had wanted Elaine Van Ness, he could have had her long ago. But he hadn't. He'd wanted Kee. They were engaged, and before too long they'd be married, and there definitely wasn't anything to worry about.

THE final details of settling her father's estate went forward swiftly. It was Saturday, Kee's last night in San Francisco, and the crowd was throwing a huge party for her at the newly opened Starlite Roof on top of the Sir Francis Drake hotel.

Tomorrow morning Kee and her mother would drive down to Pacheco Pass in Kee's small coupe, the only car that hadn't been sold. What few things they were keeping had been sent on ahead to the ranch, and Kee's bags were already packed into the luggage compartment of the car.

Tonight, she thought a little sadly as she dressed, was her farewell to the kind of life she had always known. When she came back to San Francisco to live, it would be as Mrs. Lawrence Duncan. a smart young matron. That wouldn't be the same thing at all as being Kee Barlowe, who'd been the number one debutante of her year and was still one of the most popular girls in town.

Kee's name was Victoria, but she herself had shortened it, first to Vickee and later to Kee, so long ago that no one even remembered. And Kee, somehow, fitted her to perfection. Both her face and body were small and delicately made. The brows above the lovely, limpid hazel eyes were daintily etched, and her nose was small and straight above a sensitive mouth. Once, when Kee had had a poem published in the college magazine, they had printed her picture with the caption, "A poem by Kee Barlowe, who looks not unlike a poem herself." It was true, too.

She hooked herself into her shimmering gray-green dance frock with its low, off-shoulder neckline, wondering when, if ever, she'd wear it again. But that was silly, because of course she'd be coming to San Francisco again for week-ends, staying with the Duncans, going to parties. Why, one of these days she'd be coming up to be married!

It was a wonderful party. Everyone was very gay, and everyone got a little tight. Elaine Van Ness was there, looking lush and alluring in a metallic coppery gown that matched her marvellous hair, but Kee had most of the dances with Larry, and she simply couldn't take time out to be jealous of Elaine tonight.

Later, driving out to Seacliff with her chestnut-colored curls cuddled against Larry's shoulder, it occurred to Kee that Larry had been too gay and had become a little too tight, considering that it was her last night in town. She was full of a sad, aching wistfulness, and she thought Larry should have shared that feeling, too.

When he kissed her good-night, which was really good-by, too, Kee lost control a little. Tears stung her eyes, and her lips quivered beneath his.

"Oh, look now—don't be so tragic," Larry remonstrated. "As soon as you get down there, you'll write and tell me all about everything, and next week-end I'll drive down. There must be ways to have fun, even in that isolated wilderness."

"Yes," Kee said, trying to feel comforted. "I'll write you all about it tomorrow night. And I'll call you—I'll call you Tuesday night, Larry."

"It's a deal," Larry answered. He kissed her once more and was gone.

It seemed all right then, but the next morning, driving the small blue coupe down the Peninsula, Kee's heart was as heavy as lead. Every mile that she put between herself and Larry was like a hundred, so that by the time they were nearing their destination, it seemed that the width of the continent lay between them.

"Did you remember to wire this—this person who's in charge of the ranch,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kee?" her mother asked. "I've forgotten his name."

"Martin Osborne," Kee supplied. "Yes, of course I wired him."

They reached the ranch at last. The sign over the big entrance gate said, "Rancho de los Robles." Ranch of the Oaks. Heaven only knew why, Kee thought, because there wasn't an oak tree in sight. They followed the winding dirt road for several miles before they came in sight of the house. The oak trees were here, all right. Gigantic live oaks, with the low, sprawling ranch house nestled under them as if seeking protection from the encroaching foothills.

Kee's heart sank as they drove up to her new home. It was built of redwood that never had been painted, and it looked as though it hadn't been lived in for a very long time.

A TALL figure dressed in a blue shirt and jeans came down the drive to meet them. Before the man was close enough for his features to be distinguished, Kee was struck by the litheness of his walk, the beautiful suppleness of his movements. As he drew nearer she could see that his thin brown face was illuminated by a pair of eyes that were deeply, darkly blue, and that his shock of dark hair grew in tiny unruly curls all over his well-shaped head.

She was a little taken aback. She'd been expecting to see a much older man. Not only older, but of a different type.

"You're Martin Osborne?" she questioned, getting out of the car.

The young man nodded negligently. "Yes, Miss Barlowe. I'll take your bags in. I brought groceries out from Los Banos, and did what I could to make you comfortable."

Mrs. Barlowe spoke to Martin Osborne with the condescending air of a dowager duchess, and the two women followed his overalled figure into the ranch house.

Seeing the appalled look on her mother's face as they inspected their new domain, Kee almost wanted to laugh. "How many baths?" Mrs. Barlowe had asked Brigham Van Ness.

There was one tiny bathroom, containing only the barest essentials of plumbing. Two tiny cubicles masqueraded as bedrooms. There was an inconvenient, poorly equipped kitchen. The big living room was the only decently proportioned room, with arrangements made for dining at one end and a huge stone fireplace at the other.

"But Kee, we can't possibly live here," Mrs. Barlowe said helplessly. "No one could. It's too utterly sordid."

Kee felt pretty much the same way, but just then she happened to look at Martin Osborne. His mouth was twisted cynically at one corner, and she was sure that what she saw in his blue eyes was scorn.

"Nonsense, Mother," she retorted crisply. "Sordid or not, we haven't anywhere else to live."

It occurred to her, then, that there was no sign of male occupancy anywhere, and she turned to Martin.

"Don't you live here?"

"Oh, I have a one-room cabin half a mile up the canyon," he explained. "I like being alone."

Kee was torn between conflicting emotions. She was scared half to death at the thought of remaining alone in this house with only her mother, yet she was relieved that there'd be no enforced intimacy with this Martin Osborne. There was something vaguely disturbing about him, some challenge to her personality that she couldn't quite define.

"But, Kee," her mother's fretful voice went on protesting, "there simply aren't any conveniences at all!"

"There's gas and electricity and running water," Martin said dryly. "And a telephone. You'd be surprised how many ranches in this vicinity have none of those things."

Kee said nothing. She carried her mother's bags and her own into the tiny drab bedrooms and set about unpacking. Martin Osborne took it as dismissal and went away.

The rest of that day and the one that followed was a nightmare to Kee. She discovered that food had to be cooked before you could eat it, and dishes had to be washed after you had eaten, and beds had to be made before you could sleep in them.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Her mother was no help at all with any of these things. Kee knew nothing about any of them either, but she was determined that nothing would make her appeal to Martin Osborne for help. The cynicism of his mouth and the scorn in his blue eyes were not going to be leveled at her!

She found that she was too depressed and discouraged to write to Larry as she had promised. Her mood would be bound to carry over into her letter and depress him, too. She'd wait until Tuesday night and telephone him as she'd promised.

It seemed that Rancho de los Robles had fruit orchards. Prunes and apricots, and grape vineyards. And chickens. Among these things Martin Osborne spent his time, seldom coming near the ranch house at all. Kee herself found that she had no suitable clothes for this sort of life, as well as no ability to cope with it.

Things couldn't go on like this, they simply *couldn't*.

When she telephoned to Larry on Tuesday evening, she tried to make her voice sound as cheerful as she could. Larry didn't have to make any effort to sound cheerful.

"I'll be down Saturday afternoon, darling," he said gaily. "Look, you won't mind if I run now, will you? I promised to meet some of the gang at the Lido, and I'm way overdue."

Kee felt as if he had thrown cold water in her face. He said nothing about the letter she'd promised to write. Apparently he hadn't even missed it.

Some of the crowd at the Lido, she thought dully. Not a doubt in the world that Elaine Van Ness was one of that crowd. At the thought of Larry and Elaine and the rest of them, enjoying a superbly cooked dinner at the Lido, dancing between the courses, Kee could barely control her voice enough to say good-by to him.

She tried to cheer herself up with the thought that when Larry got here on Saturday and saw how utterly impossible everything was, maybe he'd ask her to come back to San Francisco and get married right way. He *had* to ask her, because she simply couldn't stay here.

IT WAS the next evening that she burned her hand badly, trying to cook bacon and eggs for dinner. Everything had gone wrong all day. Her mother had been querulous and demanding, and the kitchen was cluttered and dirty, because no matter how hard Kee tried, she couldn't seem to achieve anything approximating order.

When the hot fat spattered over her fingers and wrist, she simply sat down at the littered kitchen table and began to cry, hopelessly and helplessly.

"For Pete's sake," an impatient male voice said, "what's the matter?"

Martin Osborne had come silently into the kitchen. Kee only sobbed louder and said, "I burnt myself."

Martin rummaged in a cupboard and brought out a first aid kit. He said nothing as he deftly put tannic acid ointment on the burn and bandaged it. In spite of her pain, Kee found herself fascinated by his hands. They weren't at all the sort of hands one would expect a ranch helper to have. Slim, supple, they were beautifully modeled.

When he spoke again, it was to ask a question.

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-three," Kee answered meekly. "Why?"

"How anyone could manage to live for twenty-three years without ever learning how to do anything useful, or practical, is beyond me," Martin said scathingly.

"I can do lots of useful things," Kee retorted, hot with rage.

"Yeah? What? This kitchen is a shambles. Your dress is badly in need of washing. I'll bet you couldn't even shampoo your own hair and make a decent job of it."

He put the first aid kit away as he spoke, and began deftly cleaning up the debris in the kitchen. Kee's anger made her speechless, but she watched him, fascinated in spite of herself.

Martin never wasted a movement. In no time at all, dirty dishes were stacked neatly in the sink, egg shells and burnt matches collected tidily in a paper bag along with the scorched and ruined bacon that Kee had been trying to cook.

He put more bacon into a clean skillet, broke eggs into a yellow bowl and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whipped them deftly with a fork. He set the table while the fluffy, golden omelette cooked. Then he turned to Kee and grinned at her, a maddening, condescending grin that made her even angrier than his reproving words had done.

"There—tell your mother dinner's ready," he said, and vanished into the night.

Mrs. Barlowe praised the food and commiserated with Kee over her burned hand. Kee ate in silence and thought about Martin Osborne. The more she thought, the madder she became.

She awoke the next morning with a grim determination to lick the problem of ranch life if it killed her. Anything Martin Osborne could do, she could do better, and she was going to show him that!

She drove into Los Banos and bought a cook book. She brought her native intelligence to bear on the problems of keeping the house and her clothes orderly and clean. What was more, she insisted that her mother help her.

"But I don't know how to peel potatoes!" Mrs. Barlowe wailed.

"Well, you can learn," Kee retorted callously. "It's not nearly so hard as playing bridge."

Things improved a little in the next couple of days. Kee fell into bed that night so tired that she didn't have time to think, and that was good. And before she knew it, Saturday was upon her.

She thought of Larry as she got out of bed that morning, feeling exhilarated and expectant. In a matter of hours he would be here. And then her heart sank again. Somehow it was utterly impossible to visualize Larry at Rancho de los Robles. Certainly he couldn't stay here overnight. There wasn't any room. He'd have to stay at the hotel in Los Banos.

And the meals. Kee couldn't imagine Larry partaking of the food she prepared for her mother and herself. Even with the aid of the cook book, she was still anything but a chef.

Shortly before noon Martin appeared at the kitchen door, a thing that never before had happened during the daylight hours.

"Understand you're having a weekend guest," he said wryly.

Kee wondered where he had picked up that piece of information, but she didn't ask.

"Yes," she answered shortly. "My fiancé, from San Francisco."

"I killed a couple of fryers last night," Martin informed her. "And I've already been into Los Banos for a few trimmings. You'd better go and get yourself prettied up, unless you want to get caught with dishpan hands. I'll take over."

Kee looked at him with a startled expression, trying to read his face. It was calm and expressionless. She wanted with all her heart to decline his offer with frigid politeness. That would put him in his place. But Larry would be here soon, and she was hot and dishevelled. And Martin could cook and she couldn't— Slowly she dried her hands.

"All right," she conceded, feeling like a coward and a traitor.

It was past two when Larry arrived, and by that time Kee was clean and fragrant, dressed in a thin, candy-striped dress. She was wearing high heels and nylons for the first time since arriving at the ranch, and in spite of Martin's caustic comment she'd proved that she could make a good job of shampooing her hair.

Larry's kiss of greeting was eager and ardent as he took her into his arms, and Kee clung to him and returned the kiss hungrily. It seemed years since she'd been in Larry's arms, instead of just a week. Brilliant color flooded her cheeks and her lovely eyes shone. Kee was her old self again.

Larry's comment, when he had taken in the details of his surroundings, was brief and painfully blunt.

"Gruesome, isn't it?"

Resentment flared in Kee. Certainly it *was* gruesome, and there was no reason why Larry shouldn't say so. But she was unaccountably irritated.

"Oh, it isn't so bad," she said defensively. "It has possibilities. But let's not talk about that, now. Tell me all the news, and what you've been doing in town."

It seemed that Larry had been doing quite a lot. Duncan's Corner Houses were sponsoring a bowling team which Larry was to manage. He'd stayed over-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

night on someone's yacht in the Marina and gone to a dance at a country club somewhere in Contra Costa county. And Elaine Van Ness had thrown a marvellous party.

Ice congealed slowly around Kee's heart. It was the beginning of the end, she was sure of that. She was no longer in a position to compete with Elaine.

AFTER she had gone to bed that night, she wondered what on earth she would have done without Martin. Martin, who had cooked and served the delicious dinner of fried chicken and green peas, of tiny new potatoes in cream and tossed green salad. Served it with the poker face of a well-trained house servant, and disappeared into the kitchen without a word when the table had been cleared.

"Capable fellow you've got there," Larry had commented.

"Oh, yes," Kee agreed in a voice that wasn't quite her own. "Martin's invaluable. He—he came with the place."

By the time Larry had kissed her a final goodnight and driven away to the hotel room he'd reserved in Los Banos, Martin was nowhere to be seen, so Kee couldn't thank him for the dinner. She'd have to do that in the morning, she thought.

She rose to the delicious aroma of perking coffee. Apparently Martin was already on the job. But before Kee could reach the kitchen, Larry drove up, and again there was no opportunity for a word with Martin.

They had a late breakfast and an early dinner, skipping lunch altogether. By the time dinner was over, Larry was showing unmistakable signs of restlessness. Kee's heart ached with the knowledge of his unease, but still she felt she couldn't blame him. There really wasn't anything to do on the ranch, except listen to the radio. There was no swimming pool, no tennis court, no saddle horses. And Larry was used to all sorts of activity and excitement.

All day Kee wished fervently that he'd bring up the question of an early marriage, but she wished in vain. It was still early when he left, giving the excuse of the Sunday traffic and the long drive back to the city, but Kee knew that he was escaping the boredom of the ranch with a feeling of relief.

She sat on the porch, hugging her knees, after he had driven off, when suddenly it dawned on her that she, too, felt a sense of relief at his departure. It had been a strain, trying to act like herself in these alien surroundings under Larry's critical eyes. In San Francisco, things were different. She and Larry had things in common there, here they were almost strangers.

Martin had cleaned up the kitchen after the meal and disappeared, and Kee found herself thinking, with some curiosity about him. Martin had said that he lived in a cabin half a mile up the canyon, but she'd been here a week and had never seen it. There was still more than an hour of daylight, and no reason why she shouldn't walk up there now and thank Martin for his help over the week end.

The cabin proved to be a tiny affair built of logs with the bark still on them. It merged itself so well with the surrounding terrain that Kee had trouble finding it at all.

She knocked a little timidly on the rustic plank door, and after a moment Martin himself opened it. His dark brows lifted in surprise when he saw her and he continued to stand in the doorway, almost completely filling the aperture, without asking her to come in.

"I—I came to thank you for standing by," Kee faltered. She felt oddly embarrassed. "I could never have managed without you."

"Quite all right," Martin said with careful, impersonal politeness. He closed the door behind him and came out, seating himself on the step. "Won't you sit down?"

Not knowing what else to do, Kee sat down on the step beside him.

"So that's the man you're going to marry," Martin said after a short silence.

"Yes," Kee admitted cautiously. "Larry Duncan."

Martin took a cigarette from a crumpled pack and passed it to Kee. He lit them both before he spoke again.

"I wouldn't—if I were you."

Kee was so surprised that she forgot to resent his impertinence.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Why not?" she asked in amazement.

Martin exhaled smoke carefully. "Because he won't wear well. That stuffed shirt type never does. He'll be all right as long as things are on the upgrade, but he'll be a broken reed in a pinch. And there are bound to be pinches—life's full of ups and downs."

"As though you could tell all that about a man from a couple of casual glances," Kee said scornfully.

Martin was unruffled. "Three years in the Marine Corps, and you get so you can size a man up pretty quickly. Besides you don't love him."

"I do so," Kee flared. "I've been in love with Larry for ages. We've been engaged for more than a year."

"So what? He was probably the most attractive physical specimen in the social set you grew up with. And probably a lot of other girls are on the make for him, and you felt you had to beat their time. But love—uh-uh."

For a minute Kee was speechless. There was just enough truth in what Martin said to make it sting. Larry *had* been the most attractive man in her social orbit, and lots of other girls *had* wanted him. Including Elaine Van Ness, she thought with a stab at her heart. But that didn't prove she didn't love him, did it?

"You don't know what you're talking about," she said flatly, rising.

Martin rose, too. "I'll walk back with you."

"You needn't bother," Kee retorted coldly, but he fell into step beside her just the same.

Neither of them said much on the way back. Just as they reached the ranch house, a big golden pumpkin of a moon crep over the scalloped edge of the oaks, and involuntarily Kee caught her breath.

"It's so lovely," she said softly. "Somehow the moon looks different here than anywhere else."

"Yes," Martin agreed. His voice, too, was hushed. "But then, there isn't any other place in the world quite like Rancho de los Robles. Some day you'll find that out, Kee."

It was the first time that he had ever called her by her first name, but it seemed sweet and natural that he should do so now. Martin was nice, she thought. Maybe they could be friends. It would be nice to have a friend in this isolated spot.

"Martin," she said hesitantly, "what you said that day about my not knowing how to do anything useful—well, you were right. I don't. But I could learn, if you'd help me."

His sudden smile was warm and compelling. Strong, supple fingers closed over hers.

"Sure, I'll help you. You can do anything you really want to do, Kee."

Kee tilted the delicate oval of her face until her eyes met his.

"Thank you, Martin," she murmured softly.

Martin's eyes on hers were warm and brightly blue. Suddenly he bent his dark head and his lips brushed hers, lightly, fleetingly.

"See you tomorrow, Kee," he said, and was gone.

FOR the first time since she'd been at Rancho de los Robles, tomorrow began to mean something to Kee. Every day there was something new to learn, something new to do. Martin taught her to cook the simplest foods so that they tasted wonderful, and how to make beds with neat hospital corners, and even how to sew on buttons.

It got to be Thursday before Kee remembered that she hadn't written to Larry or called him up since his departure. A feeling of guilt overwhelmed her, and she decided to telephone at once. A split second before she could translate her decision into action, Larry beat her to it.

"Look, honey," he said, "I wonder if you'd mind very much if I didn't come down this week-end? You see, a bunch of us were figuring on going up to the Van Ness place on the Russian River. The fishing's swell right now and—"

"No," Kee answered in a small, chilled voice. "No, I don't mind, Larry. Have fun."

They talked for a few minutes longer about inconsequential things. Kee felt as though the bottom had dropped out of everything as she hung up.

Her spirits remained at the same low ebb until Saturday morning. Martin

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was helping her to hang some new curtains in the living room, and as he worked he said, "I suppose the boy friend'll be here today?"

"No," Kee answered dully. "He—he had to go somewhere else."

"Well, in that case, why don't you drive into Los Banos with me late this afternoon? We can do the week-end shopping and maybe find a little excitement on the side."

"All right," Kee agreed indifferently. It was all the same to her whether she stayed here or went with him. For the life of her, though, she couldn't imagine what sort of excitement Martin could expect to find in Los Banos. She prettied herself up for the trip as best she could, however, putting on a fresh dress of corn-colored linen and small strapped sandals.

Martin took her first to the big farmer's market, where they spent half an hour choosing vegetables and such fruit as did not grow on the ranch. Then they went to the self-service grocery for staples and canned things, and when all of these were safely locked into the car they made the grand tour of Los Banos' main street.

There was a lot more activity than Kee had expected. There was a tiny restaurant where she and Martin ate de luxe hamburgers and french-fried potatoes, and there was a bowling alley where they spent a boisterous, laughing hour. There was a movie that Martin said they would take in later, but Kee said she didn't think her mother would like staying alone all evening. There was a soda fountain where they went for malts, which was full of girls and young men, most of whom seemed to know Martin.

One pretty blond girl called to him from halfway across the room. "Don't forget the big dance in the Legion Hall next Saturday night, Martin."

Martin grinned at her and shouted back, "Wouldn't miss it for the world, Prue."

Well, Kee thought, if there was going to be a dance, maybe it would help to keep Larry from being so bored when he came down next week-end.

The big, brilliant moon was in evidence again as Martin turned the car homeward. Kee sat beside him, feeling strangely light-hearted and at peace with herself. The night seemed filled with quiet, muted music, like a poem that Kee wished she could put into words.

"You know," she confided in Martin, thinking out loud. "I've always wanted to be a poet."

Martin gave her a quick, sideward glance. "You could make being a poet mesh very easily with life on the ranch. There's no place quite like it for creative work."

Involuntarily, Kee's eyes went to Martin's hands where they gripped the wheel. Those sensitive, spatulate fingers that had intrigued her from her first glimpse of them.

"Maybe you do some creative work, too?"

"I paint a little," Martin admitted briefly.

Something clicked in Kee's mind.

"Why you're *that* Martin Osborne, the one who had the exhibition at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco last year! One of the pictures was of that very cabin you live in."

"Well—yes," Martin admitted. "You see, when I got out of the service, the doctors advised outdoor life for a while. I didn't have much money, so I took on this job as caretaker at Rancho de los Robles. After a while it grew on me. I was happier there than I'd ever been any other place, so I just stayed on. I think it would be the same way writing poetry, Kee. The poetry would have to be good, because of the kind of place this is."

His remarks were revealing an entirely new trend of thought to Kee. She pictured the run-down little ranch house entirely refurbished with fresh paint and chintz. A piano, a record collection, books and flowers. A dog and a cat. A collection of poems by Kee Barlowe—it was a beautiful day dream. There was only one thing wrong with it. Larry Duncan could never fit into it.

"You didn't ask me into your cabin the other day on account of your pictures," she said suddenly.

Martin laughed. "That's right. But now that you know the worst, you can come up and look at them at any time."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kee did go up and look at them, the very next afternoon. They were good, even better than the ones she remembered having seen in San Francisco. Apparently Martin's talent was growing and improving all the time.

Kee did a lot of thinking as the new week began. She thought about that Saturday jaunt into Los Banos and the fun she and Martin had had together. She thought about that coming Saturday night dance in the Legion Hall, and the pretty girl called Prue who had reminded Martin to be there.

By the time Wednesday arrived, she found herself wishing that Larry would telephone and make another excuse to stay in the city this week-end. Because then maybe Martin would ask her to go to the dance with him. They'd have malts at the village soda fountain and drive home together under the moon.

And then the solution to it all hit her with a staggering impact. Just one word from her, and Larry wouldn't come down at all—ever. Was that what she wanted, really?

KEE thought about it long and earnestly, and when she had finished thinking she knew then that what she really wanted was Rancho de los Robles, to write poetry again—and Martin Osborne. Maybe she couldn't ever have Martin. But one thing was certain. She'd outgrown Larry, outgrown him irrevocably in a few short weeks.

She sat down instantly and wrote Larry a note, breaking their engagement. She put her engagement ring into a box and made a small, neat parcel out of it. And then she drove into Los Banos and mailed both letter and parcel.

She was back at the ranch, singing softly to herself as she went about her preparations for the evening meal, when Martin came into the kitchen.

She smiled at him, a smile that managed to be both warm and shy.

"Martin," she said softly, "that dance they're having in Los Banos Saturday night—would you take me, or do you already have a date?"

"Why, no," Martin answered slowly, "I haven't got a date. But—"

As though drawn by a magnet his dark blue eyes traveled to the fingers of her left hand, and then upward until they met and held Kee's hazel ones. The blue eyes asked a question, and the hazel ones answered, and that was enough. The next instant Kee was cradled closely in Martin's arms, and he was kissing her. A veritable shower of kisses, on her temples and eyelids and tilted nose, and finally on her soft, trembling mouth.

"Oh, Kee, I've hoped so much that you'd do just that," Martin said huskily. "It's us from now on, darling. Just us, and the ranch. Oh, Kee, I'm going to paint such wonderful pictures now, because I'll be painting them for you!"

"And I'll be writing wonderful poems, too, because I'll be writing them for you," Kee whispered back.

"Our whole life together is going to be a poem," Martin told her solemnly. "A poem that's never going to end. And each stanza will be made more perfect than the last."

Yes, Kee thought, as the joy and wonder of their love glowed in her heart, life with Martin would be like that.

Tired Kidneys Often Bring Sleepless Nights

Doctors say your kidneys contain 15 miles of tiny tubes or filters which help to purify the blood and keep you healthy. When they get tired and don't work right in the daytime, many people have to get up nights. Frequent or scanty passages with smarting and burning sometimes shows there is something wrong with your kidneys or bladder. Don't neglect this condition and lose valuable, restful sleep.

When disorder of kidney function permits poisonous matter to remain in your blood, it may also cause nagging backache, rheumatic pains, leg pains, loss of pep and energy, swelling, puffiness under the eyes, headaches and dizziness.

Don't wait! Ask your druggist for Doan's Pills, a stimulant diuretic, used successfully by millions for over 50 years. Doan's give happy relief and will help the 15 miles of kidney tubes flush out poisonous waste from your blood. Get Doan's Pills. (Adv.)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Farewell to Love

By MARY ARLINE HARTE

Kate saw all her wonderful dreams coming true—except for the golden one in her heart which meant the most!

KATE tossed back a strand of her red hair and looked up at the pretty blue sky all frothed around with white clouds. She was tired, her back ached and the sun was like a mustard plaster. But half the roof still remained to be shingled and come the middle of the afternoon that horrible nosey Peter Lorn from the next farm would wander over to see if she was really doing it.

"You can't get this place in condition all by yourself," he'd said the first time he'd come over, completely unannounced, completely uninvited. Just butting in.

"I'm going to do it all by myself," Kate had told him. "I've got to." Which

"You can't buy love," Kate said. "Not even with all you have"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wasn't strictly the truth. She didn't have to. She'd just gotten an idea in her head and, being stubborn, she was going to stick to it. She said, "I'm not fixing up this beastly farm to live on it. I hate the country. I'm fixing it up to sell. The minute Uncle Vaughn left it to me and I remembered about it I saw possibilities in it. I'm going to fix it up and sell it and travel on the money."

She closed her eyes and saw the lovely things she always saw at this point. Moonlight and the soft swish of waves. Music in the distance and a man—tall, handsome—leaning on the ship's rail beside her and murmuring devotion into her eager ear. That was what she was working for, that's what she wanted to sell the farm for. Travel and romance, beauty and luxury. She'd never had any of them.

Peter said, as if he'd been reading her mind, "I suppose you think, if you travel and splash money around, that you can find some rich, handsome fool who'll marry you. Well, if that's what you want, good hunting."

He'd gone off then, swinging his broad shoulders and whistling and whacking at daisy heads with an apple switch he'd picked up.

Kate, at that moment, began hating him heartily. She still hated him.

"How are you going to finance all these repairs?" he'd asked. "Even if you do the work yourself it takes money. You can't knit up shingles for your barn roof from meadow grass."

"I'm going to negotiate a loan at the bank."

"You can't. No banker in his right mind is going to lend money to a fool girl who thinks she can do the work of three men repairing a farm."

WELL, Orin Barkley, down at First National, had lent Kate the money but there'd been small triumph about it because, even with the cash in her hand, Peter had kept on sneering.

"You can't do it. You can't possibly do it." He kept this tune up constantly and every afternoon he came over to sing it in her face. And this in spite of the fact that she'd papered the ten rooms of the house and painted all the woodwork, she'd tiled the bathroom floor and rebuilt the chicken house and now, hot and mad and feeling devilled, she was shingling the barn roof.

There were only two things that cheered her up. One was remembering the job she'd had in the bustling office of Harvey Brothers, brokers. She'd been one of half a hundred girls sitting all day with dictaphone headpieces clamped to her ears, writing endless letters. There'd been no fun in that and less than no future.

Of course this business of shingling a roof wasn't much fun either, but it did have a future. And that was the other thing that cheered her up. Just thinking of the trips she was going to take on the money she got for this farm. She might get to Egypt or even China.

How far could you go, how long could you live on—maybe—fifteen or twenty-five thousand dollars? If she got the farm fixed up in tiptop shape, it might mean all that to her. Oh, boy.

She whanged at a shingle and felt the sun blister her shoulders.

"The female Hercules, contractor and builder. All hail!" The voice bounced up to her from the ground below, and she didn't even have to stop hammering to know who it was. That Peter.

"Oh, but I think it's wonderful!" This was a new voice, light and lilting as a bird's song.

Kate peered over the ridge of the roof to see who it was. A girl. And what a girl. Where did she come from? White organdy, with a full ruffled skirt and tiny white sandals. Golden curls that tossed around some crimson roses she'd pinned to her shoulder. Or maybe Peter had pinned them there. They were his roses. They grew in gorgeous, massed banks all around his house.

Kate curled her lips a little and went back to her hammering.

Peter said, "This is Elaine, Kate. She used to live around here but she won a beauty contest and went to Hollywood. She comes back to visit every once in awhile and she's staying at the house with Mom. She's crazy about the country around here, aren't you, Elaine?"

"Oh, I am, I am!" trilled the charming bird voice. "Over and over I wish I'd never gone away. There's nothing like this delightful country life."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You're a darned liar, Kate thought viciously, and hammered down another shingle.

"Kate is a very smart girl, Elaine," Peter said. "She's doing over this place single-handed, and I'll bet that's more than you, with all your beauty contests, could do."

Kate sneered at him over her shoulder. You can save your sarcasm to pickle onions in, mister, she thought hotly. I, for one, can do without it.

Elaine laughed gaily. "Oh, Peter darling, you're so delicious! Of course it's more than I could do! In fact, it's more than I'd ever want to do."

Kate ground her teeth and hated both of them so hard it made her spine ache. She turned her back squarely on them and made all the racket she could with her hammer and nails.

"Look how her hair blazes in the sun," said Peter. And then, after a minute he added, "She doesn't seem any too cordial. Could it be that we are not welcome?"

"It could be," said Elaine, and offered up her laugh again.

Silly empty-headed thing, giggling all the time, thought Kate. She sounds like a baby's rattle.

But there was nothing more forthcoming, either in the way of remarks or laughter, so by and by Kate turned. They'd gone. They were nearly at the stone wall that divided her land from Peter's. As Kate watched, they reached the wall and, with a swoop of his arms, Peter gathered up Elaine and lifted her over. Kate up on the top of her barn, could hear Elaine's silver laughter and she could see her lovely small oval face lifted to Peter's.

Abruptly Kate looked away. Probably Peter had kissed Elaine. Any man would have been a fool not to. Kissing Elaine, from a man's standpoint, must be a pretty delicious business. Soft and fragrant and sweet.

Kate suddenly felt sick. Maybe the sun was too much for her. She'd better get down where it was cool and save this till the sun was lower.

SO IT happened that she didn't get around to eating her supper till nearly eight o'clock. She was tired but she was hungry, too, so she whipped up a good supper. Just as she was taking the biscuits from the oven a knock came on the door. She set the pan on the back of the stove and went to answer it.

Peter stood there, blinking with the suddenness of the kitchen light. A flashlight dangled from his hand.

"Can I come in a minute?" he asked. "My flashlight's gone dead, and if I can fix it I'd be grateful."

"Probably," said Kate crossly, "it needs a new battery."

"It doesn't. I've just put a new battery in." Peter grinned at her. "Can I come in to fix it?"

Kate jerked the door open farther. "I suppose so," she muttered. "You'll get the best light over there by the side table." She waved a hand toward the far side of the room and, turning, took the pan of biscuits from the stove.

Peter didn't even take one step toward the side table she'd directed him to. He just stood still and, lifting his head, sniffed long and noisily.

"If I could bake biscuits that smell as good as those I'd be only be too glad to offer them to people," he observed.

Kate pretended not to hear him.

He said, still standing there watching her, "Can you bake apple pies too? And doughnuts? Gosh, if I'd known you could do all that in addition to shingling a roof—"

"Oh, shut up!" Kate slammed the biscuits on the table and turned on him in fury. "I've had enough of your nasty sarcasm and your impudence and your beastly defeatism!" She cocked her copper head, curled her lips and mocked him, "You can't raise the money—you can't paper the house yourself—you won't be able to rebuild the chicken coop—no girl can shingle a roof. Well, I've done every one of those things! And all *you've* done is sneer at me. Yes, I can bake biscuits, I can make pies, I can preserve and roast and make stew with dumplings and angel cake—and— Oh, get out of here! I hate you. I loathe you. Get out!"

"I won't." He wasn't grinning now. His eyes were gray wells and there was something tender about his mouth.

Kate looked away. But she heard him coming toward her and then felt his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

arms turning her around.

"Do you know," his voice was as tender as his mouth, "how very beautiful you are when you're angry? And I ought to know. You've been mad at me almost every minute since I first saw you. Katie, why have you?"

Kate still didn't look at him. She didn't want to. It wasn't that she was afraid to. Certainly not. It was merely that she preferred not to annoy herself.

He said, "Katie, look at me." And when she wouldn't, he tilted her chin up with one finger and made her. And then, before she even dreamed what he was going to do, he muttered, "Gosh, you're beautiful!" and he was kissing her.

For a split second Kate's mind hammered at her to fight him off. She must. Why, she hated this man. He hated her. He was making a fool of her by kissing her this way. She must stop him.

For all of a fraction of a second she thought these things—but she didn't do a thing about it. She couldn't. She was limp, breathless. All strength had flowed out of her. And her lips were such happy lips pressed deep and strong against his. It was dreadful, it was shameful, but there it was.

After a long, endless moment he lifted his head. And from behind them an amused laugh tinkled gaily.

Kate whirled. Elaine, in a frothy formal that made her look like whipped moonlight, stood in the open doorway. Her golden hair, falling in waves to her shoulders, was caught back with a spray of bluebells that just matched her eyes and more bluebells were clustered in a corsage.

She said, still laughing softly, "I shouldn't do this, I know. And please forgive me for being here. I came home early from my dinner date because I wanted to make my peace with Peter. We'd quarreled about my going out." She smiled beautifully and poured a golden look into Peter's eyes. Then she turned with a sweet shy smile to Kate. "I shouldn't have laughed just now when Peter kissed you. But you—you look so unfeminine in those old jeans and that red-checked shirt and your pigtails! I wonder how it ever occurred to Peter to kiss you. But I shouldn't have laughed. I'm sorry."

"Yes, you are!" Kate was so mad that the whole kitchen seemed to be filled with little dancing red devils. "You're terribly sorry, I can see that. And I don't blame you a bit for laughing. No doubt Peter was dying of silent hysteria himself. And I—"

"Katie!" Peter's eyes were blazing. "I was *not* laughing at you. I wanted—"

"Oh, keep quiet and get out." Kate stamped her foot. All she wanted now was to get them away, both of them. She wanted to be alone. She wanted to cry and scream and, maybe, stamp her feet. It would feel darn good to throw things.

Peter said, "Katie, please—" and took a step toward her.

"Get out!" she screamed at him. "Get out!"

"We'd better go," said Elaine, picking up her frothy skirts. "We really had, Peter. She looks dangerous." She ran out the door, but Kate was certain she was laughing in the darkness. The sting of tears rose, burning and beating behind her eyes. She whirled on Peter.

"Go after her! Go on. Get out. Oh, can't you see that I never want to lay eyes on you again?" With one hand she shoved him out the door and with the other she slammed it. And then, crazily, her anger drained out of her and she dropped to the floor, crouching there miserably while sobs shook her whole body. . . .

IT WAS along toward morning that she admitted what was the matter with her. She admitted it by denying it hotly.

"I'm not in love with him!" she cried out loud, thumping her pillow furiously. "I'm not! I'm not!"

The next day she didn't see Peter at all. He didn't come around as he usually did to see how she was getting along on the jobs he said she couldn't do. Of course she didn't miss him. Of course she was tickled to death that he let her alone to work in peace. He was probably off somewhere alone and happy with Elaine. Bad cess to him.

She got herself an early supper but she didn't bake any biscuits. She didn't want to be reminded in any least way of Peter. So she ate sliced ham and fried

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

potatoes and tomato salad and thought of him every minute.

At eight o'clock someone knocked on the door, and the knocks were matched by the quick pounding of her heart. Kate flew to open the door, but the man who stood there was no one she'd ever seen before.

"Miss Farr?" he asked. He was tall and rangy and middle-aged. He took off his battered hat, and Kate saw wispy gray hair and a bald spot. But his blue eyes twinkled and his smile was easy and warm. "My name is Sam Galt. Peter Lorn told me you were fixing this place up to sell. I'm interested in buying a farm around here. Would you like to talk it over?"

"Oh," said Kate. "Yes, certainly." So Peter was anxious to get rid of her as a neighbor and he drummed up a buyer for her place. All right. She'd talk to the man, she'd sell to him if she could and then get away. She could take the trips she'd planned and forget that such a man as Peter Lorn ever existed. That was it. She'd forget him.

Kate and Sam Galt agreed on terms and made a date to meet at the lawyer's office the next day. That was fine. All that night when Kate couldn't sleep she telling herself how fine it was. First she'd go to New York and buy some clothes. Gorgeous clothes. The kind that would make the stuff Elaine wore look like cheesecloth. (And what good will clothes do you, my fine lady, if Peter isn't to be around to look at them? Shut up, said Kate firmly to her heart.) Then, after she got the clothes, she'd go to Bermuda, though it was a little late in the season for Bermuda. Perhaps it would be better to go to Buenos Aires or Rio. Just think—she had the whole world to choose from. What fun! Yes, she thought bitterly, lots of fun.

Then she berated herself for a fool. Wasn't this what she'd planned for and dreamed of? Well, she had it. Now go to sleep, goose, and dream about how lucky you are.

The sale of the farm went through in the morning, and that very afternoon Kate began to pack. It wasn't much of a job because her possessions were few. Of course, after she'd done her shopping in New York there'd be more.

She was just closing the last bag when she looked up to find Peter lounging in the doorway. His mouth was grave and he had an odd expression in his eyes.

"Leaving?" he asked, and his tone was a lid tightly covering his thoughts.

"It looks like it, doesn't it?" Kate's voice was sugar sweet. "A girl doesn't usually pack bags for an afternoon of amusement."

Peter made a gesture, ignoring her sarcasm.

He said, "Why are you going, Katie? Is it because I made you so angry? Because I'm such an abominable neighbor? Have I chased you away?"

"Certainly not." Kate tossed her red head and her eyes glinted. "Nobody could chase me away if I didn't want to go. I intended to sell the place all the time. You know that. And I merely took advantage of the opportunity you offered me. Thanks for sending Mr. Galt over here."

"I didn't send him," said Peter. "He said he'd heard you were going to sell and I said I'd heard so too. That was all. I'd be the last person to push you into selling. I like you for a neighbor."

Kate stared at him. Was he telling the truth? Was there a chance that they could be friends and maybe, after a while, something more? Her heart rose till she could feel it beating in her throat and at her ears, hammering for attention. Had she been a fool to sell? She could have made a living for herself on the farm. And she could have stayed near Peter. Maybe in time—

"I'm coming in and I'm coming up!" Elaine's gay voice trilled and sang and her little high heels, clicking on the stairs, accompanied it. The next moment she was in the doorway. "My dear! You're not going away? But where? What a shame. How are the fences and the barn roofs going to get on without you?"

KATE bit her lip. Of course. The fences and the barn roof were the only things that would miss her. Peter certainly wouldn't. His remark about liking her for a neighbor had been nothing but casual courtesy. She'd be a fool to attach any importance to it. She said,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whipping a fair amount of gaiety into her tone, "I've sold the place and I'm going to taste the fruits of industry. I've worked like a dog getting this place in condition. Now I'm going to travel and have fun."

"Moonlight on the Carribean and high romance," said Peter. He laughed as if he found the idea very amusing.

Elaine said, "What fun, my dear, and how we do envy you, don't we, Peter?" She snuggled against him as she spoke and tucked her hand possessively under his arm. "Don't we wish her all the luck in the world?"

"We sure do," said Peter.

"And now we ought to go and let the poor girl pack in peace, Peter, Come on, darling. I'll race you to the stone wall." She whirled gaily and skipped toward the stairs.

Peter hesitated for such a tiny second that Kate wasn't even sure it was hesitation. Then, with a shout of laughter, he went after Elaine, and a minute later Kate saw them tearing across the lawn. Then they weren't tearing. Elaine was down, a crushed bundle of flaring, pleated skirt and rose sweater, and Peter was on his knees beside her.

Kate watched them, her lips curling. A cheap and ancient trick that. A turned ankle and pretty suffering to touch a man's heart and get yourself in his arms. And it was working with Peter just as well as it had worked with fifty thousand other men. For Peter was picking Elaine up with beautiful tenderness, and her arms were wound around his neck. Just as they started off, it looked very much as if Peter kissed her.

Kate, watching from her window, stamped her foot. All right! Let Peter kiss Elaine. Let Elaine lead him around by the nose. What difference did it make to her? She was going to have a wonderful time all by herself. She was going to have all the money she wanted to spend. She was going to have the clothes of a princess. She was going to travel and see the world. To heck with Peter. . . .

The clothes were like the materialization of a dream. Kate shopped and bought—lamé that made her look like a silver spear of moonlight, a fox jacket that was a froth of beauty, sport clothes that were gay and chic. She had them all sent to the Waldorf where she was staying. Princesses and visiting potentates always stayed at the Waldorf so why not she?

She dined alone in the glittering new clothes with her copper hair piled high and her skin looking like alabaster, and everyone glanced at her and glanced again and wondered who she was. It was amazing what clothes could do for you and it was fun. Besides when you were busy and kept yourself in a whirl you didn't have time to think about a man with gray eyes and a mocking laugh, a man who could kiss your life right out of your body.

She'd taken passage on the *King George,* and on Wednesday noon when the long white ship backed away from her pier and swung around to take to the open sea, Kate told herself that this was the most exciting moment of her whole life. It was wonderful, thrilling. It was certainly a lot better than burying yourself in the country, as she'd been tempted just for a second to do, in the hope of winning Peter. Peter! Who was Peter?

There were proably two dozen men on this very ship who were better than Peter ever thought of being. Phooey on Peter!

She met three of the men at dinner that night. Kerry Raine was an artist going to Haiti to do woodcuts for a travel book he'd been asked to illustrate. John Hobbs was an older man—forty-ish perhaps—making his annual trip to check on his plantations on Jamaica. Noel Peverly was going home to Trinidad. He'd been born there, of English parents, and he was coming back after six years of the war and Oxford.

In the three days that followed, they all played shuffleboard together, tramped their mile around the deck together. The three men, taking turns amiably bribed the steward for between-meal delicacies they thought Kate might like.

Kate told herself this was fine. This was just as she'd dreamed it would be. This was really living.

Wasn't she a smart girl to make her dreams come out just as she wanted them to?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BUT that night she dreamed of Peter. It seemed that they were fighting—which of course was perfectly natural. Only this time they were fighting over something they'd never fought about before. Peter was bawling her out for going away.

"Why shouldn't I go away?" she cried at him. "You didn't want me to stay!"

"How do you know I didn't? You never even gave me a chance to try to keep you."

"Why should I? You were having such a good time kissing that silly Elaine—"

"Did you see me kiss her? Or are you just jumping to a conclusion? You and your fiery temper and your red hair—"

"Do you mean you didn't kiss her? Do you mean you wanted me to stay?"

She woke up then, and her cheeks were wet with tears. Which was crazy because there was nothing to cry about. She was forgetting Peter beautifully. She was having a very good time. Why should she be reduced to tears because she'd dreamed of him? It was silly.

That afternoon Kerry Raine took her up on the more or less deserted boat deck to paint her. He set up a camp stool and a portable easel, arranged his canvas and squeezed out the little blobs of paint on his palette.

Then he posed her this way and that till he got her with the light just as he wanted it.

"Most beautiful girl I ever saw," he mumbled around the brushes he held in his teeth. "Most gorgeous coloring. Never saw real copper hair before. Dozens of girls call their hair copper but you—gosh, girl, you've got the real thing."

Kate smiled. Compliments were nice. They were like candy when you wanted candy. It occurred to her that Peter had never even hinted that he thought her easy to look at in blue jeans and with her face all smudged with dirt. Maybe if she went back dressed in the clothes she had now—

She snipped her thoughts off with a mental yank. Thinking of Peter again! Didn't she have anything better to do? She smiled warmly at Kerry and began to pay strict attention to the muttered flow of compliments that was still coming.

At sunset he stopped working.

"No color has its true value in changing light like this," he said. "Come on over to the rail and let's watch the sky."

Kate moved from her cramped position and joined him. He was a tall man and slender. Fair-haired with blue eyes that were always half closed as if he saw so much color and beauty in everything that he had to shield himself a little. His hands were artist's hands, long and sensitive, and one of them he laid now over Kate's small one as it rested on the rail.

"Marvelous sunsets they have down here, don't they? We never get anything like this up North. Look at that unbelievable fuchsia and turquoise and crimson and mauve. Amazing."

Kate obediently looked. It was beautiful. Grandly, gloriously beautiful. And she said so.

At the sound of her voice Kerry turned. "But not so beautiful as you," he said. "Truly, Kate, I've never seen anything like you. Just looking at you is an inspiration. I ought to have you around all the time." His hand covering hers tightened. "Why not?" he whispered. "Why couldn't I have you around all the time? Why can't you marry me?"

Kate smiled. An off-hand proposal, this. She said, "That's rather an odd reason for getting married, isn't it? Just because I'm paintable? Don't people usually have other reasons for marrying?"

"You mean love?" His eyes smiled at her and turned her hand over so he could hold it between both his. "Darling, I could fall in love with you very easily. In fact, perhaps I'm a little in love with you now. You're so beautiful any man would be a fool not to fall in love with you. So now that I've promised to love you will you marry me?"

"No," said Kate.

She thought of doing other things. She thought of slapping his face because this kind of thing was really very insulting. Then she thought of doing a speech telling him what she thought of him. But these things were too much trouble and he wasn't worth it. So she merely turned away and walked down

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the companionway to her stateroom.

It was while she was dressing for dinner that she thought, Wonderful! I didn't lose my temper. I ought to tell Peter. For once my red hair didn't come through. Then she realized that keeping her temper was, in this case, no virtue. Kerry Raine simply hadn't been worth that much effort. Could she have lost her temper so constantly with Peter because he was worth so much?

"Oh, drat him!" she said out loud and, going to her closet, chose a flame and gold lamé number that seemed to pour its colors right into her hair. "There, that'll show Peter what I think of him." With which completely inconsistent and slightly insane remark she went on dressing.

AT DINNER that night Kerry was as suave and charming as if he'd never proposed to her and been turned down. Probably, thought Kate, he proposed to every paintable girl he sees. It's just routine stuff with him. Her lips curled in a disdainful smile.

But it was not such routine stuff when, two days later, the ship put in at Kingston and John Hobbs came to her to say good-by.

"I would very much like not to say good-by here on the ship. Suppose you drive with me out to my plantation and we can have tea out there? You will have plenty of time. They have to discharge one cargo here and take on another. They may even be in port all night. Come, please. It would give me great pleasure to show you my plantation."

So Kate in a white linen suit and a broad white hat went down the gangplank on John Hobbs arm, and when she saw how everyone rushed to do him service, she began to realize that he was really a personage. He went through Customs as if he owned the island and then, through the delightfully lazy bustle of a tropical city, they drove out to the plantation.

Kingston amazed her. It was so modern, so beautiful with the golden sunlight pouring itself over the white buildings, and the people with their brilliantly gay colors against their deep tan. Even the streets were somehow made rich with the talk and laughter.

"I love this place!" said Kate. "It seems so friendly."

"It is. It's a nice place to live." John Hobbs took off his Panama and patted his hair a little. It was gray hair and, Kate thought, made him look very distinguished.

The chauffeur, a small man with brown skin, merry dark eyes and white livery, drove the big car across the city and out towards the country.

Kate was fascinated. Avenues of palms, banks of brilliant flowers, foliage so dense it would seem that nothing less than a machete could cut through it and, as if they were part of the landscape itself, the pink and blue and green houses that were tucked here and there.

"Like it?" asked John Hobbs, and his eyes rested on her face eagerly.

"I love it," said Kate.

It was nearly an hour later when the car turned off the highway and headed up a long avenue of royal palms. Beyond the palms were emerald lawns, velvet smooth, and flowers so lush and brilliant they made you catch your breath. Finally, after the car had turned and circled and swung, there was the house. It was white and broad and low with a crimson flowered vine wreathing the doorway. Its wide windows were shining in the light, and half a dozen servants, crisp in white aprons and livery, were waiting on the broad steps.

Kate was impressed. It was like a story book or a movie. It wasn't like anything she'd lived before. She caught her breath a little with excitement.

John Hobbs had greeted the servants with great kindness and now he turned to her.

"Would you like to go through the house before we have tea? It was decorated by Ross-Smith of London and it might interest you."

So they went through the house, and in every detail it was perfect. Shining mahogany, polished brass, Oriental rugs that gave richness to the gleaming floors. Through wide doorways the charm of endlessly delightful rooms was visible and in the dining room a crystal chandelier glittered in the mellow sunshine.

"It's all lovely," said Kate. "It's the most charming house I've ever seen."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Do you think so?" To her surprise John Hobbs' voice was shaking a little. "Do you really think so?"

They had tea on the terrace where the air was deliciously heavy with fragrance and tall trees bent above their heads. The service was Georgian silver and the transparent cups were Dresden. There were thin bread and butter sandwiches and tiny frosted cakes.

Kate sipped her tea and ate her little cakes and wished she need never go back to the heavy reality of the ship and her life. This was heaven.

JOHN HOBBS said, "Perhaps you have guessed why I brought you here, Kate, why I have shown you the house and given you a glimpse of my life. Can you guess, Kate?"

"Why—no," said Kate. But she could, and the idea startled her.

She looked quickly at John Hobbs and looked away again. She'd never thought of him that way. An older man with gray hair? But a very kind man (she remembered how he'd spoken to the servants) and a man who, certainly, could give her everything that any girl ever dreamed of. She found her breath coming quickly and her heart doing some kind of a dance.

"Well," said John Hobbs, "I see you've got the idea. What about it, Kate? Will you marry me?"

"Oh," said Kate. "Oh!" And she couldn't say anything else. She had to decide quickly. The ship sailed at six. This was such a beautiful place. Could she learn to love an older man? He would be thoughtful, generous. She would have the world at her fingertips. She would have clothes and jewels, everything she wanted. She glanced at John Hobbs. He smiled.

"It will all be yours," he said gently, waving his hand toward the house, the lush, beautiful grounds, the servant coming toward them with a tray.

Kate thought, I suppose I'm a fool to hesitate. But aloud she said, "You can't buy love, John Hobbs. Not even with all you have."

He said, "I shall love you, Kate. You will be a cherished wife. And you will decorate my home. You will be the kind of hostess I've always dreamed of at the head of my table. You are gracious, sweet, charming."

Kate stood up. She felt cold and curiously hard, like marble. Yet underneath, somewhere, there was anger.

"That is a fair bargain, I guess, from your standpoint, John Hobbs. I bring you beauty and charm and in exchange you frame me, as a picture is framed, with your house and your servants and your wealth. Thanks. You don't, I am sure, mean to be insulting. But will you please call your car and have me taken back to the ship? Right away."

He didn't raise a scene. He was, after all, a gentleman. He let her go, but his eyes showed his sincere regret.

"I presume it is the price I pay for middle age," he said. "I am sorry, my dear. Life with you would have been a lovely thing."

She got back to the ship an hour before it slid out to sea. That hour she spent in her stateroom ostensibly dressing for dinner, but she spent a good deal of it pacing up and down.

What was the matter with her? Hadn't she dreamed of meeting a man of wealth and charm on this trip and marrying him? Wasn't that the kernel at the center of all her dreams? Well then, she'd had two darned good chances. Kerry Raine was already famous, and she'd never meet another man as wealthy as John Hobbs.

What on earth did she want? She'd said she wanted love. But you couldn't have everything you wanted in this world, and any sensible girl would take all that John Hobbs had and say farewell to love. She, Kate Farr, was certainly a sensible girl. What was wrong?

"I'm not in love with that Peter!" she almost shouted. "I'm not marking time and turning everything down because I'm hoping— Oh, darn!" She stamped her foot, shook her flaming hair furiously, and burst into tears.

By the time she went down to dinner she had mopped up her tears and looked fairly radiant. She wore white jersey, clinging and lovely, and white jasmine clustered in her hair. After dinner she leaned on the rail watching the bubbling, simmering trail of phosphorus that shone in the ship's wake.

"Ah," said a voice behind her. "I've

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

got you all to myself. I've counted on this ever since I met you that first night. Only for a time I was afraid Raine and Hobbs would really get ahead of me."

Kate turned. It was Noel Peverly, the young Englishman, who was going home to Trinidad. He was a nice boy, tall and slim and fair with the English coloring.

"When we get to Trinidad I want to take you up to meet my people," he said. "You'll like Mother and Dad—everyone does. Mother is the daughter of Lord Heath, you know. Lord Cecil Heath. And she—well, she's specially charming some way. You'll love her."

"Will I?" murmured Kate vaguely. And then she said, "Excuse me, please. There's something very important I must ask the captain." When she found him, coming down from the bridge on his way to his quarters, she said, "Captain, you've got a wonderful boat but how soon can I get off it?"

He said, cocking a shrewd blue eye, "What's wrong? Not having a good time? I've seen you around the ship completely surrounded by men. That usually spells a good time for a girl."

"I know. I've had a good time but I've got to go back. How can I manage it?"

THE Captain shook his head. "Women!" he said and grinned at her. "You never know what you want, any one of you." Then he told her how she could do it. He'd put her off at the next port, but there was no steamer back for ten days.

If she wanted to, though, she could take a small island ship over to Puerto Rico and so up to either Miami or New York.

"Thanks," she said. "I'll do that." Kate went back to her stateroom and began to pack.

After she'd gone to bed she felt like an awful fool. Why in the world was she doing all this? Why didn't she go on with her trip? And if Noel Peverly wanted to propose, if he wanted to dangle an English title in front of her nose, why let him. She could turn him down too, couldn't she? But then what would she do? Just go on refusing to marry all her life? Oh, she was being an awful fool!

That night she dreamed again of Peter. He was enormous, like a giant or, better, an ogre. He had immense teeth that he was gnashing at her and he had her in his huge hands, shaking her the way a terrier shakes a rat.

"You never gave me a chance!" he yelled at her. "I'd like to shake you till your teeth rattle. I love you and all you do is run away from me. Do you think that's nice? I love you. Get that, you little fool. I love you!"

(Continued on page 111)

To the Men

Though our skirts are getting longer,
And our manners more sedate—
Though our jitterbugging's over
And our slang has got the gate—

Though we change with changing fashions,
And our ways are turning tame—
We're every bit as sentimental,
And we love you just the same!

—HELEN ARDSLEY

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Complete Novelet

TAKE ME OR

CHAPTER I

ROPE'S END

IT WAS hard for Lela Main, at twenty, to think of herself as washed up, yet she knew she was. As she looked down the neon-lighted casino and resort studded highway leading south out of Las Vegas, known as the Los Angeles strip because it headed that way, she admitted to herself that she was fresh out of such desirable commodities as a job, money, clothes, food and a future.

"There is not," she thought as the whole, horrible catastrophe scorched her mind, "even Rudy Carter any more."

The debacle had sent her fleeing from

When Lela Main Enters the Juke-Box Game

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lola leaned against the piano as Roger ran through the first bars of "Begin The Beguine"

LEAVE ME

By Edward Churchill

bandleader Carter, from a mediocre night club on a Hollywood byway into a bus labeled *Las Vegas*, everything she owned packed in two bags.

Building optimism came hard, particularly when a low sedan, the hundredth, seemed to lunge at her, blinded her with its lights, sent up dust from the highway and gave her lungs a dose of exhaust fumes. The passing cars all had presented her with the same treatment during the past five hours of rebuffs, of hunger, of pain-racked legs and aching feet. As she had searched for a job she wondered if she could hold on much longer.

Ahead of her lay her last chance, the Kit-Kat Club, a combined cafe, night

Her Heart Switches on a Melody of Love!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

club and casino.

That didn't count, of course, the new Navajo-Brentmore, which looked like a movie set against its desert background —as far above her talents as the stars were above her blond head. She'd seen it coming in on the bus that hot afternoon in early fall, set in an amazing emerald green lawn, violent in contrast with the brush, mesquite and sand it had pushed back.

Swans glided serenely on silver ponds over which trees nodded, whispering their secrets to the hot breeze that blew off the wasteland. Colonnaded porches of the main building, housing night club, dining room, bars and casino, offered cool and expensive sanctuary not for Lela Main. Behind the building, like soldiers on full dress parade, the new cottages stood invitingly at attention.

Further on, a huge sign had proclaimed that the Ritz Brothers and Jimmy Durante were there for laughs; that customers could dance to the magic rhythms of the great Roger Tucker and listen to all the glamorous ballads of that piquant star of stage and screen, Gail Cornell.

It was all a mirage, but definitely, for Lela.

And here was the Kit-Kat Club, just a big, bare building, which, Lela had been told, furnished either "live" entertainment when the casino made a killing or juke box serenades when customers and the nightly play failed to materialize to a profitable extent.

WEARILY she paused outside for a moment, surveyed herself with acute distaste under the glare of the neons. Following a routine, she'd done it a score of times this night, she quickly got a handkerchief from her over-the-shoulder purse of worn brown leather and dusted off her brown and white spectators which had taken her many miles farther than the maker had intended. She pulled down her tired green, lightweight wool sports dress, now sticky and uncomfortable in the night heat. She took off the faded green kerchief which she had worn to keep road dust out of her shining golden hair, ran a comb through the cascade.

Her last job was to touch up full lips, apply a deft dab of rouge to cheeks which, she saw with a start, were pale and hollowing, and smooth down delicate arched eyebrows with a fingertip. Her heavily lashed blue eyes seemed to her to be growing larger and appeared frightened.

That was to be expected, she thought, after twenty flat "nos," and the realization that this was the end of the line.

She shook off the heavy blanket of her fatigue, forced a smile and went inside. She asked a floorman to point out the manager. He did, and she saw a large and greasy human being, his big face dragged down by a double chin, his hair shiny with too much oil. As huge as he was, and as repulsive, he was immediately and completely dwarfed in her eyes by the slight form of the brown-haired young fellow to whom he was talking there by the craps table.

Lela, as she looked at him, suddenly felt dizzy, wondered if the odd sensation was caused by lack of food and three miles of hiking, and knew it wasn't. Maybe it was the curly, tumbled mass of hair, the twinkling of bright, brown eyes, the laughter that tugged at the corners of a wide, generous mouth. Or it could be the broad forehead, the very nice nose with the slight upturn. No, it was the whole picture, from scuffed shoes up to the tight-waisted trousers and the open collared shirt, the bronzed throat, the tanned face with its crinkles of laughter and that devil-may-care hair. It was even more than that. It was one of those "where-have-you-been-all-my-life" things that sent her blood tingling, her pulse racing and gave her such a giddy feeling that she had to hang onto a slot machine lever for support.

"Don't be a fool, Lela!" she told herself. "You couldn't fall so fast!"

She was trying to pass the whole feeling off as coming from a combination of light-headed imagining and physical and mental exhaustion when she realized that she had been staring and both men were looking at her. She braced herself, walked forward, and the big man with the fat face was saying in an annoyed tone:

"What is it, young lady?"

"I want a job," she answered, and saw

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the sympathetic smile on the face of the younger man who had done so much damage to her circulation and respiration.

"No jobs!" snapped the big fellow.

"Now, Sam!" He had a nice voice, too, warm and self-confident. "You don't treat femmes like that—not nice femmes. Ask her what she does."

"I sing," said Lela, not waiting for Sam. "My last job was in a Hollywood night club."

"We don't need no singers," said Sam with grim finality, or so it sounded to Lela.

"Maybe," the young man urged, "she could be a shill. Or maybe wait table until there was an opening. Or sell cigarettes. Or work in the cloak room."

"The cloakroom's closed—too hot." Sam turned his wide, lumpy back to Lela and said, as if he'd never seen her: "Look, Johnny. We ain't gettin' enough changes, and the platters smell. If you don't get going, we're goin' to lose customers."

Knowing that she had made less than a ripple in big Sam's life, Lela walked slowly toward the entrance of the place. She put her hand on the knob as the world seemed to go by in slow motion. She opened the door and stepped out into the night. There was no place to go, now, except to the little room she'd rented in a house run by a slab-sided, tough-faced woman named Knott. A cubbyhole which made even her two battered suitcases look like trunks, it was that small. But she'd been lucky to get it.

What next? There wasn't any next!

SHE didn't hear the door close behind her, but she did feel the touch of fingers on her arm, and she started, whirled. Johnny was smiling down at her, the lights in his eyes dancing. She became alive to the thrill of the pressure.

"What a spot!" she thought. "Starving to death, kicked around, turned down, and up to my neck in grief—and then, for no reason at all, this man walks into my life."

He said: "So you sing? I'm interested in music myself. I'm Johnny Bangs."

Lela looked up at him, trying to keep her feelings out of her face, the strange feelings, such as that she had known him for a long, long time. She told him her name.

"I like that, too," he said. "How's about a lift to town?"

Lela clutched her purse, replied: "I'm—waiting for a bus, thanks."

His even features broke into a mischievous grin.

"Don't fib. The bus doesn't come out this far. Besides, you don't look as if you had a dime, anyway."

She didn't resist when he led her around the corner of the building toward the parking lot, where she expected to find some kind of a hopped-up eccentricity with a loud engine. Instead, he piloted her to a three-cornered contraption. It had a trio of wheels, two in front, one in back. Over the back wheel was a tin hood. Behind the two front wheels was a platform. It widened her eyes as she stared at it.

"Open air taxi," said Johnny Bangs. He swung onto it, kicked down on a lever and explosions smote her ears. He yelled to her to get on behind him, put her arms on his waist, hook her fingers in his belt, and she did. The next instant her head was almost torn off her body, the wind was blowing her hair straight out behind and the powered tricycle was scooting noisily and bumpily toward the colored haze hanging over Las Vegas.

It exploded by the two gay resort hotels, the Last Frontier and the Rancho Vegas, whose glamorous portals she had not dared enter. As it blasted onward she shouted into his ear:

"I live at Mrs. Knott's. Know where it is?"

He heard and turned his face sidewise. She thought his features had firmed and his jaw seemed set, but then, it could be hardened against the wind.

"Everybody knows Mrs. Knott's." The words were torn from his lips. "That's what they call Divorcee House."

She nearly tumbled off as he slowed abruptly for the light where South Main angled off Fifth and then shot up Main.

"Wrong way!" Lela shouted. He kept on going, bumping across Charleston, pounding three blocks further and slewing up against the curbing in front of a darkened building. She could make out

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the sign on the window—"SILVER STATE MUSIC COMPANY." He got off the seat of the strange vehicle, smiled mockingly, bowed deeply and indicated the door across the highway.

"El Rancho Bangs!" he told her as he went ahead, fished out a key and opened the door. Lela hesitated.

"It's late," she temporized. "I'd better get to bed."

"We've got to talk business," he said, as he switched on the overhead light. Lela gasped at the confusion of the place. The first thing she saw was the battered upright piano against the wall, even before her vision was outraged by three gaudy juke boxes, a helter-skelter collection of parts, what looked like a recording machine, rows of shelves filled with records, and several packing cases.

He sensed her bewilderment.

"I said I was interested in music. Take me or leave me." His hands waved indefinitely over the hodge-podge, but she wasn't watching them. Those last words scored her brain, brought her mind to life.

"Take me or leave me," the words echoed inside her, with a strange insistence that demanded another answering phrase.

"I'll take you," she said. She wondered why she did.

"Fine." He rubbed his palms together. "Now that that's settled, I think I can start you at twenty a week. The work's not tough. All you do is pack the records and type up the titles so I can change the juke boxes weekly."

"Juke boxes?" Lela asked. All her life her uncle, who had raised her, had taught her to hate canned music.

He seemed to catch her feeling from her inflection.

"I hate 'em, too," he continued, "but they're a living. Nickels and dimes and quarters. But to get back to you. Of course, there's a few books to keep, and you can answer the telephone when I'm out on service calls, and buy the new records."

"Wait a minute!" gasped Lela. "I haven't taken the job, I don't know how to keep books, I—"

"Say you will," he urged, looking at her intently.

Lela's head was down in thought.

HE LIFTED her chin. She saw his smile and his enthusiasm and somehow the thought of juke boxes and the horrible disorder and the dust and dirt and spare parts and broken pieces of wire on the floor didn't seem to matter.

"I will," she said, and felt very happy. Already her mind was telling her a million things that must be done, and she was fascinated by the old piano and recording machine. As she looked around her, seeing the battered desk with the telephone and the long strips of heavy paper with the pink dividing lines on them, he was fishing into his hip pocket. She watched his long fingers flip open a thin wallet. She saw inside a ten dollar bill and two ones. The ten came out and the next thing she knew he was pressing it into her hand.

"But you've only two dollars left!" she protested, eying the ones.

He laughed at her alarm.

"I've got credit, and you haven't," he said, his face softening until it was boyish. "This, Lela, is a hard town."

She took the money, put it in her purse. Just looking at it made her smell phantom food.

"You'll be here at nine in the morning," he went on. He reached into his trousers pocket and handed her a key. "This'll let you in, just in case I'm out on a service call. You'll know what to do." He pointed to a stack of cardboard boxes. "Load these with new records off the shelves over there—the far shelves. The other records are new and I sell 'em. Bangs enterprises, I think of myself as. Run some of these stripes here into the typewriter. Knock out the titles. Put titles and records in a box—twenty-four—and we've got a juke change ready."

"Juke boxes!" Lela said, forlornly.

"You'll love 'em," he told her, "when we go around and take the nickels, dimes and quarters out of 'em."

Then he showed her his living quarters. In a partitioned section, far to the back, was a cot, a night stand on which a telephone rested, which he explained was for night emergency service calls, and a chair stacked with hastily discarded clothing. Lela gasped at the walls. They were covered with autographed photographs of singers, orches-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tra leaders, musicians, and one stood out. It was an eleven by sixteen picture of Gail Cornell in one of her most alluring, glamorous poses, and she had written:

"To Johnny boy, with love—Gail."

Lela swallowed hard.

"Hobby," Johnny said.

"Photographs—or hearts?" she asked, wishing she hadn't.

"Strictly photos," he answered. "And now I'm going to run you over to the girls who're taking the cure."

"Cure?"

"That's what they call the six-weeks trick, waiting for the papers."

She nodded vaguely. Then:

"Johnny, what's a shill? You said I could work as a shill."

"That's gambling with the house's money to attract the suckers. Good looking dishes like you spend their time being come-ons."

His hand was giving her arm that tingling sensation again and she was being propelled toward the door. She mounted the fiery, noisy steed, clung to Johnny's belt and soon was deposited in front of Mrs. Knott's. She was so glad, all of a sudden, that her roommate, twice divorced Sandra McCall, had paused on her way to a job in a Los Angeles night club to scrawl a note to Mrs. Knott, for that had got her into the big house. Rooms were as tough to find in Las Vegas as in any place else.

"You'll like working for me better than being a shill," Johnny said, as they went onto the front porch. "Now, get some sleep. I'll see you bright and early."

"Thank you for everything," she said.

"Skip it, Lela."

Then he was down the steps, and a moment later his angry vehicle was spitting fire. Again she seemed to hear those words, haunting, demanding, for no good reason at all.

"Take me or leave me!"

She glanced up and down the street. Her eyes settled on a sign which read, *Owl Lunch*. He mouth watering, she got a tighter hold on her purse, her heels tapped down the steps, and she went fast in its direction. She sat down at a counter, and a man in a greasy apron came forward to take her order.

"The biggest steak in the house," she said. A customer at the end of the counter dropped a nickel into the dazzling monstrosity against the wall. It started blaring. "A nice big steak," she added, to herself, "for the queen of the juke boxes."

CHAPTER II

GAL TO REMEMBER

A COUPLE of days after she'd reported for work the first time, Johnny Bangs sat her down near the recording machine, and told her something of his aims and ambitions.

"I've got twenty juke boxes out now," he said, "but I don't make any money for two reasons. Now, you ask me what they are."

"What are they, Johnny?"

"The first is that I'm paying for them on the installment plan and most of the money I take in has to go toward them on the first of each month. The second is that the biggest operation expense is buying records. You only get a week's play out of the most popular ones, and maybe three weeks out of those the boys and girls don't go for. Even at wholesale prices, they cost a lot."

"I can see that."

"Right. Now, if I had a lot of money, I could make my own waxes on the recording machine. Lots of top-flight singing stars come up here, most of 'em not under contract to the major recording companies. If I had a pressing machine, so I could make my own discs, I could get these people to do numbers for me cheap. I'd do this by paying royalties and promising to send some of the records to the big outfits so that they could hear how good these people are and maybe sign them."

Lela, sitting in a chair, leaned forward, clasping her hands over her knees.

"That would be wonderful, Johnny! Why, you'd get all the records you wanted for practically nothing."

He leaped to his feet, shut off a switch

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the recording machine, moved back the needle and started the disc. In clear, full tones, the conversation they had just completed came back to her. She realized she had never heard such a clear recording.

"Why, Johnny!" exclaimed. "That's wonderful. It's just exactly as if we were talking!"

He grinned at her and shut off the record.

"Sure!" exclaimed. "I bought that old machine and hypoed it up. Know a little about electronics, even if I say so myself. Now, to get real fidelity—"

He glanced at his watch.

"Say! Time to eat!" he burst. "Let's go!"

She felt exaltation run through her as he extended his hands, took hers, held them too long as he pulled her to her feet. He leaned forward and his lips brushed her hair. She felt as if she had grown wings and was floating on them as he took her to a small restaurant on Fremont Street, escorted her to a far booth.

After they'd ordered the business lunch, Lela wasn't even sure what was on it. Johnny leaned toward her, smiled, and she liked what she saw in his eyes.

"You're cute!" he exclaimed. "Just the kind of a gal a fellow needs."

"What kind of a girl do you really like?" she asked.

"One with golden hair, blue eyes and a suggestion of freckles. One who can wear a sweater and has neat pins."

"That fits me!" Lela told herself. Aloud, she urged:

"That's all right for the outside, but what about the inside?"

She saw his dreamy look.

"A gal with a sense of humor who can make it easier when the going gets tough. A gal who's never really been in love before—"

"Never, ever?" she interrupted.

"That's right. I guess I'm old-fashioned and hard to satisfy. Anyway, I'd like her to be loyal, and share the good and the bad, want to go places and do things, play as well as work."

He caught himself. "Hey! What're you doing to me? I never talked to anyone this way before." He lowered his voice. "I never wanted to," he added, "until I met you!"

The waitress, bringing the food, shattered the magic spell. But, all during the rest of the meal, Lela's heart kept singing to her:

"I fit—I fit—I fit!"

They went back to the shop and settled down to work, only it wasn't work for Lela. It was fun because she and Johnny were together, going places, as he'd put it.

THEN an unhappy premonition made her bite her lip as she saw the sleek, low convertible pull to the curbing. The attractive girl left the car, crossed the sidewalk and opened the door. With sinking heart, Lela watched Johnny's eyes welcome her. It was as if she, Lela, had suddenly left the room and there was no one else in the world but the vision hiding behind the tinted lenses.

Lela's heart went down another story and practically in the basement as she saw that the woman was Gail Cornell. The "piquant singing star of stage and screen," as Lela bitterly thought of her, was wearing a gay colored bandana over her dark hair, which had a soft, beauty salon glow even in the shadowed store. Her "piquant lips" were too-widely smeared, and there were traces of hard determination around her jaw. Her "piquant throat" was too heavy from too much throaty singing. Her "piquant form" was robustly outlined, above center, by a sweater of far from modest yellow and tucked into jodhpurs which weren't bashful about showing "piquant nether curves" and ended in very new and too-gaily embroidered half-boots.

If Johnny had forgotten Lela, Gail Cornell failed to notice her at all. Both her hands went out to Johnny.

"Come on, darling!" she said. "We're going out to see that horse I'm planning to buy. You'll simply love him!"

Lela looked at Johnny, saw with more than distress, a bumpkin quality, so far hidden, appear. He seemed to her to be like a puppy practically hysterical from a pat on the head by his mistress as he exclaimed:

"Sure, Gail."

The singer swung abruptly, still not deigning to notice Lela, and Lela sensed that she had not seen her more from a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fixed haughtiness rather than because she had on dark glasses. Gail Cornell headed for the door with Johnny on her heels, calling over his shoulder without glancing back:

"If anybody calls tell 'em I'm out on an emergency and take their number."

Numbly, Lela walked to the window and watched the pair get into the topless car. Well, the wolverine had invaded paradise. It was so nice to have had Johnny for a couple of days, together with his dreams of big things, and his enthusiasm, and the joyousness, and the way she felt for him, that strange emotion that made it easy for her to forget all her musical ambitions and play nursemaid to a bunch of juke boxes.

Oh, well, she thought, as she watched the car drive away, she should have known better. Those autographed pictures all over the wall should have told her that her paradise would slip a cog now and then. Johnny, with his easy smile, his twinkling eyes bright in crinkly tanned skin and his football-end physique was bound to be fair game for all of the painted hussies.

She felt suddenly lost. The floor was swept. The scattered parts had been placed neatly in the bins Johnny had so skillfully built. She'd taken his soiled clothing to the laundry and had changed the sheets on his cot. Five boxes of record changes were carefully stacked by the door. The furniture had been dusted, from recording machine to the night stand beside his bed.

She walked slowly over to the piano. The photographs in Johnny's alcove stayed in her mind and goaded her. She'd like to turn back, tear them all down, and really do some good work on that simpering, "Am-I-not-wonderful" piece of corny art depicting Gail Cornell in her most artificial come-hitherish moment.

That phrase ran through her mind. "Take me or leave me." Well, she'd chosen Johnny. She really hadn't. Some elemental force had done that for her. But what about Johnny? He'd neither taken anything nor left anything. He hadn't done anything and hadn't thought anything about her. She might just as well be the recording machine or the simple set of books in which outgo outweighed income.

Her long, tapering fingers ran over the piano keyboard. Her sensitive ears told her the tone was good. Those of her right hand groped easily for a melody. Those of her left explored chords. She thought of her uncle who had taught her all she knew about music, the thin, cultured man who, although he had died four years ago, still was alive inside her.

Even now, scenes of him, bent over the piano, filling his small study with Debussy, Chopin, Brahms, half a dozen other great composers came to her, and the lilting, lovely things he had created himself. He'd been a great instructor.

ALL she was, she thought, she owed to him, and then smiled at the realization of what she wasn't. Her father and mother had died in a railroad accident when she was five, and Uncle John, her mother's brother, had taken over.

The telephone called her back from her memories, pulled her idling fingers from the keyboard.

She answered and jotted down instructions.

"This is the Golden Spur, sister. A nickel short-circuited in the juke box and something burned. She won't play."

"Sounds like a coil," she replied. "Johnny's out on a rush job. I'll send him over when he calls."

She went back to the piano, fingers groping, mind groping, heart groping.

During the afternoon, the Golden Spur called three times. The Silver Nugget made two complaints about a broken record, and three other places asked for repairs and adjustments. Lela sold half a dozen records and some sheet music to four customers.

At ten minutes of five, the convertible swung in front of the shop. Lela heard it, looked out. Johnny was standing on the running board, bending over Gail Cornell. He came around the car, nearly tripped over himself waving goodby and then barged into the place, his hair more than usually rumpled and his mouth a smudge of carmine.

"Anything doing?" he asked, breathlessly.

"Practically nothing," Lela replied. "If you mean the juke boxes, most of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

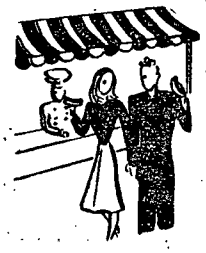
them have stopped."

Her eyes leveled on his, then dropped to his lips.

"And," she added, "that's the first time I ever heard of a horse using lipstick."

CHAPTER III

ENTER A MAN



LELA MAIN'S heart and mind were reviewing a lonesome three weeks, barren as the desert surrounding Las Vegas except for two quick lunches at the counter of Jose's quick order emporium with Johnny Bangs. Now, as her fingers ran smoothly over the keys of the old piano and she hummed the tune, thinking of Johnny, she heard the front door close and the sound of footsteps.

She swung around on the stool as she realized that whoever it was had come around the counter, through the little swinging door, and was approaching her. She looked up, and her hand flew to her throat to push her heart back down. Her blue eyes widened, color burned her cheeks as she recognized him.

"That was very pretty," he told her. "It had a lilting quality, the thing a song needs. And heart, too. A bit torchy."

She choked.

"Thanks, Mr. Tucker," she said. "I like it, too."

"It's the way you sing it. You have a lovely voice."

She'd heard that before. As she toyed cynically with his words she measured the man who stood gazing down at her and remembered some of the things she'd read about him. For instance, the long procession of females who had sung with his band, blondes, brunettes, titians, good, bad and indifferent, with the same threnody of shopworn romance running through their comings and goings.

Cracks in the columns: "Roger Tucker's reported flaming over Terese Leyden, his latest find, now warbling with his orch," "Will Roger Tucker head altarward with his newest thrush, Sandra Flame, whose title is apt?" "Hollywood night spots hear that little rumpus between Roger Tucker and Dena Dayton ended in contract tearing." "Roger Tucker, who's as careless with his femmes as he is with the tunes he borrows, is looking for another songbird now that Mignon Crane's left the nest."

That's the way it had gone, and here he was, in the flesh. Nice flesh, too. Six feet and an inch of man, starting with two-toned sport shoes, cream slacks into which he had deftly poured himself, an open-collared sport shirt wrapping a torso which looked as if he'd done a lot more in his life than exercise with a baton. His face was eager and boyish now, his blue eyes intently bright, his large, generous mouth smiling. Lela liked his hair, also, not too curly for the masculine rest of him, graying just enough over the temples to put him in the "men of distinction" ranks.

And he was saying:

"Would you like to work for me?"

"I thought Gail Cornell was your singer?"

He lowered his voice automatically and looked around him.

"Gail—Miss Cornell, and I," he said, "have had a slight difference of opinion."

Lela saw the brittleness in his eyes then, and recalled again the cracks of the columnists.

"She's quite emotional, temperamental, and she's decided that singing seven nights a week is too exhausting." His lips turned down at the corners in deprecation, as if he were apologizing for the girl. "She wants me to get someone to fill in for her on Mondays. I've agreed. I'm wondering if she's suffering from complete exhaustion or if Cupid's taking pot-shots at her."

Lela thought of Johnny and something inside her went taut, snapped with a bang.

"If you'd like to come to the Navajo-Brentmore for a tryout, say Monday at three, I'll be glad to see if I can use you."

The opportunity sent Lela's thoughts scattering in all directions. With the extra money perhaps she could make

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

things easier for Johnny, lend him enough to make payments on the juke boxes—help him buy needed equipment for the portable recorder, further his scheme to make waxes of visiting talent and produce his own records!

"What say?"

The words jarred her mind back to normal.

"I'd love to," she said, trying to hold her voice steady.

"Have you the music to that tune you were humming?"

"I've made a copy."

"Fine! Let me have it."

She went to her desk, got it and gave it to him. She wondered whether the smile he gave her was paternal or something Little Red Riding Hood saw when the wolf bent over her.

A SUDDEN thought struck her. "And what did you come in here for in the first place, Mr. Tucker?"

He grinned at her, his teeth white against his tan.

"To buy a platter of 'Love For Today,'" he said. "My latest recording."

She went to a shelf, her feet on air. She got the disc, put it in an envelope, and waved away the proffered silver dollar.

"It's on the house," she told him, trying not to think of what a dent the wholesale price of forty-two cents would put into her twenty-per-week. He went out, cautioning her not to forget their date for the audition.

She watched him go while her mind played with ideas he'd given her, nice, fresh new views on life. Once she got with Rogert Tucker's band and made a name for herself, the sky was tops. But that thought awoke the old fear.

She could sing well for one, for two, for a dozen or even in a night club before a rowdy crowd, so long as she wasn't jarred emotionally. She remembered that horrible night in Hollywood, and knew she'd have to lick her complex.

With the copy of the music gone, she decided to get out the wax she had made and play it to herself. She needed assurance that her voice was as good as she thought it was. She went to the shelf where she'd placed it with other discs without letting Johnny know she had made it. She lifted one platter after another, at first wondering, then puzzled and, finally, exasperated. She was in the exasperated state when she saw Gail Cornell drive up and Johnny go through the same pleasant farewells—to him, she thought bitterly—that he always did.

He came bouncing in. She gave him the long list of calls, pointed wordlessly to his lips. He retreated to the back of the store, returned with his face washed.

"What's up?" he asked.

"Johnny, what did you do with my record?" she asked quizzically.

"What record?" he queried.

"Never mind. I was just fooling around one day. You'd better start running down those complaints. They'll be jerking your boxes."

"That's right," he said. He jammed his hat onto his mussed hair, went out, and she heard the staccato protests of the motor-tricycle as it carried him down Main street.

She listened until the sound had faded into the other traffic noises, then remembered that she had some entries to make in the books. She finished that small job, noticing that the bank balance had suffered considerably of late. She visioned Johnny taking Gail to expensive places, like Lacey's, in the Silver Nugget, a Hollywood importation with movie prices. The telephone rang. Hoping it wasn't another service call, she answered.

"Lela?" She recognized Roger Tucker's voice at the same time she noted the use of her first name.

"Yes."

"Look, I can't get you off my mind. How's about supper tonight? I don't have to play at the Navajo-Brentmore until nine. Have you seen our show?"

Lela said she hadn't and began to worry about clothes. In spite of any reservations she might have, she found herself wanting to accept. Too much of the dingy shop was too much!

"I haven't seen it, but I'd love to," she said.

"I'll pick you up." She sensed the eagerness in his voice. "Where?"

"Fifth and Main at six."

"Fine."

She was waiting when he drove up in a new, shiny coupe, feeling self-con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

scious. This was due to the generally tired condition of her burnt orange linen dress, the one with the white cuffs and staggered white hem trim. It was entering its third season in a state of exhaustion. The burnt orange platform sandals with gold hobnails had had thick soles which were not now so thick, and one of the hobnails was missing. Her nylons gave her the precarious feeling that after a dozen washings they might run at any minute. The double string of pearls around her neck had never been introduced to either Mr. Tiffany or an oyster.

But Roger Tucker said, as if he meant it: "You're lovely."

MAYBE, she thought, it was because she'd taken time to pluck her eyebrows, extra minutes with her make-up while three other girls stormed the Knott rooming house bathroom, and had hurriedly patched nail polish which had cracked off during her adventures with Johnny's ancient typewriter. Or because she had brushed a sheen into her tawny shoulder length hair.

"Any place special?" Tucker asked.

She found herself saying she'd like to go to Lacey's and two minutes later they were there, an intimate place, she saw, with comfortable booths and excellent service adjoining a million dollars worth of gambling hall, which included everything from race horse results and chuck-aluck to faro bank and craps. The head waitress showed them to a booth and she was seated facing the entrance, drinking in the comings and goings of people who looked important.

She was half way through a dinner of green turtle soup, lobster thermidor and tossed green salad, and Tucker was telling her about the men in his orchestra when she saw Johnny Bangs and Gail Cornell move up to first place in a line which had formed for booths. Johnny became aware of her first and looked very much surprised at seeing her, a surprise which caused his eyebrows to go still higher as he witnessed the back of Roger Tucker's head.

It wasn't surprise, she saw with a start, which made the Cornell's eyes first widen, then burst into flame, a malevolent burning. Nor was it the same emotion which caused blood to drain from her cheeks, making them anemic under her make-up. She watched the girl look up at Johnny, say something in a low voice to which he first protested and then, puzzled, surrendered to her demands.

They left the line, disappeared.

"Well!" Lela thought, with some satisfaction. "At least she saw me this time and knows who I am!"

The meal finished, Tucker suggested a drive, and as his car rolled out West Charleston in the cooling air, he told her that he was sure she'd make good and intimated, more by tone of voice and the way he said things than by any statement, that she might get a full-time job.

"I find that I must feel sympathetic toward my singers and they toward me if we're to make a success," he said. "We must understand, really learn to know each other. After all, leader, orchestra and singer are just one composite thing, or it's no go."

She wasn't quite sure whether he was discussing the matter from a purely musical standpoint or not, particularly when she thought of the string of singers who had come and gone in rapid succession. She wondered if they hadn't understood and found new jobs in self defense.

The interior of the Navajo-Brentmore made her gasp. While she'd been in beautiful places before, as a guest, she hadn't sung in them and, professionally, the place frightened her. A uniformed attendant smilingly drove the car away. To left and right were the ponds, the swans and the trees, and then they were walking up the steps to the huge, colonnaded entry, wide, high and modernistically graceful. Inside, to the left, was the casino, a room as large as the biggest hotel lobby; the foyer was complete with long bar and countless tables with deep, comfortable leather chairs; the night club, at the right, was terraced, gay in painted walls and a blue-silver ceiling. She'd be singing there!

The thought made her chest contract, gave her a weak, gone feeling inside.

Tucker seated her at a small table close to the curtained, raised stage. He took her hand, held it.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I'll have to run now," he said. "I want you to see the whole show and get the feel of it."

She felt the warm, encouraging pressure of Tucker's fingers and then he was gone. A few minutes later the curtain floated back and he stepped out to applause from the crowded room. He lifted his baton and the orchestra, after a spectacular, almost symphonic opening, went into a smooth, impelling Latin American number—a bolero. The next was a rhumba, a waltz, another bolero. Then came the floor show, with the indefatigable Durante clowning his head off and the Ritz Brothers going zany. Finally, Tucker announced that he and his band were on a national network, the lights dimmed and Gail Cornell appeared in a shoulderless black evening gown. Lela felt the quick intake of her own breath as the spotlight made her dark hair shimmer, picked up the diamond bracelet on her left arm, gave a duskiness to her tanned skin.

EVEN Lela had to admit that the Cornell was good. This was big time. She wasn't singing to this audience alone. She was putting herself over to people all over the country. Her voice was definitely torchy, impelling. Her tone quality was excellent, and she put the feeling of the lyrics into her delivery.

Lela became aware of a man standing beside the table, and then sitting down. She looked at him—Johnny!

"Hi!" he exclaimed. "Mind if I join you?"

Lela controlled the throbbing she felt and concentrated on Cornell, who was getting a warming applause. She concentrated on every note and every move through the next two numbers, and realized with considerable trepidation that this was really the big time, and that she'd have to push herself to the limit.

"She's really good," she told Johnny.

"Not half as good as you'll be," he replied. "I know you've got what it takes."

"How?" she asked.

His smile was enigmatic.

"You'd be surprised."

His sudden, almost hurt look startled her. "Of course, I didn't expect you to fall for him."

Was that resentment, even jealousy in his voice?

"Your Gail is very good," she said, trying to make her voice sound casual.

"Possessive pronoun unwarranted," he replied. "You've got her worried."

"Why? Roger told me she wanted Monday nights off to go heart-throbbing and he thought I could carry the show. I suppose you got that from her, with variations."

He picked up a fork, tapped on the table and then gave her an oblique look.

"Gail didn't tell it that way. In fact, she just now sounded off back stage, and it was no love song. Anyway, it's a terrific chance for you. National hookup, bundled up in big names, doing your stuff in the hottest spot in Vegas."

Would she have trouble with Gail? The thought sent a little shiver down her spine, even in the hot, smoky room. An emotional outburst was all she needed to make her life complete, and her future uncertain.

The curtains went back revealing Roger, his baton, and his tuxedoed men. It was a bolero again.

"Dance?" Johnny asked.

She nodded ecstatic approval. Johnny was good. Not only that but it was the first time she'd been in his arms, even if it was just the semi-impersonal business of following his feet around. It bounced her right off the floor into a world of their own. She didn't believe it was over when Roger signed off with a funny little signature.

After that came the second show.

She saw Johnny smiling up at the stage, that kind of a smile she hadn't had from him, and followed his romance-charged glance to Gail, who was running through the second of her three numbers. Gail was whipping it right back to him with interest. Then she saw Lela, and her face froze so stiffly that Lela expected to hear an off-note.

Johnny said: "See you in the morning, Lee. I've got a chore."

Lela's heart dived in the direction of her worn platform sandals. This had been Gail's last appearance. He was going after her.

He left to her dismal good-by and pulled the evening with him. The cur-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tains drew, the lights went on, and Lela looked around. The place was in keeping with her mood—desolate. The show-wise audience, knowing that the entertainment was over, had almost vanished, leaving only a few oblivious, hand-holding couples. She was wondering about Roger when he appeared, all smiles, to ask as he sat down:

"Like it?"

"Wonderful—and hard to measure up to," she replied. "It frightened me."

His hand was over hers and pressing it.

"You'll make it." He looked up at the terraced entrance. Lela's gaze followed his troubled one. Johnny was departing with Gail. Roger, sighing with relief, she thought, said:

"Certain things have made me decide to move up your try-out. The joint's closing."

LELA watched the retreating pair because Roger was looking that way, too, his eyes definitely unhappy.

"The boys have agreed to stay. If you're not too tired we might as well get it over."

Her heart shifted into high gear and started pounding like an engine pulling a hill.

"Very well."

"You'll do 'Begin the Beguine,' 'To Each His Own' and the number you gave me," he said. "Come along."

As they rose, she saw the heavy drapes being pulled over the entrance and was glad. That meant that no one else would be coming in. Roger led her to some stairs, back stage and onto it, waving a blanket introduction to the bored, tired men who made up his band. They nodded perfunctorily, as if they thought her one of a long procession of little girls who didn't know any better.

The curtain opened and she felt conscious of her frayed costume. Her low, throaty contralto carried her through the first number. At its conclusion there was a small hand-clap from the stay-laters. She glanced at her watch. It was after two o'clock.

"You were a bit stiff on that one," Roger said. "Relax. Give it more."

She nodded. She put everything she had into "To Each His Own," a song now tired, but still solid. The applause was a little louder this time.

"That's the stuff!" Roger encouraged in her ear. "Now, here's 'Take Me or Leave Me.' Give, darling. My arranger's thrown the book at it."

His baton came down. The flood of music welled and lifted, and she found herself going along with it. It was lovely, lilting, throaty, and heavy with violin. It carried a sob, a bit of heartbreak, and hunger. She could scarcely believe her ears, and her sense of quality marveled at what the arranger, Roger and his men had done to it.

She swung into it smoothly, easily, her contralto soft, smouldering. She looked down at the empty chair where Johnny had been sitting and everything she felt went into her throat, into her voice.

Take me or leave me,
Please make up your mind,
I've got to hear
One word of cheer
And that, dear, is love underlined.
Take me or leave me.

Johnny seemed to be there. She imagined him staring up at her as he'd looked at Gail, and it was all over in no time. She wasn't prepared for what happened next. There was a burst of applause from the night owls, but even more than that. She heard the thunder behind her and turned around. Roger's men had laid aside their instruments and they, too, were applauding! Tears of happiness welled in her eyes as she bowed to them, and then Roger insisted that she meet each one as the curtain drew against the still appreciative customers who were now tapping spoons against glasses and demanding more.

The musicians began packing instruments.

Roger turned to her, his arms outstretched and took her hands.

"I don't have to tell you you're in, my dear," he said.

He wanted to drive her home after coffee in the lounge, during which he paid lyric tribute to her, praised his ability to recognize talent even when humming at a battered piano, and predicted a tremendous future. She recalled the two dollars she had put in her pocket and said:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"It's almost dawn, Roger. I'm still a working girl. I'll grab a taxi."

She found it necessary to insist. He hauled his frustration across the wide porch with her, waited while the doorman signaled a taxi, put her in and paid the driver. He gave her a forlorn look as he bid her goodnight. Ten minutes later she was letting herself into Mrs. Knott's rooming house, wondering what the driver had meant when he'd said:

"It's a tough haul, ain't it, lady?"

As she went up the stairs to her cubby-hole, any curiosity fled, for she was feeling too much like Cinderella to bother with thought. If things would only run smoothly she'd manage to make the grade Monday night. If only things ran smoothly!

CHAPTER IV

Exit a Dream

THE rest of the week was a nightmare of preparation.

Lela took her only evening dress, an ivory satin number which was dotted with gold sequins, to be refurbished and pressed, and at the same time felt that it had joined the ranks of other fine old antiques, the only difference being that it wasn't in a museum. But it was shoulderless, and compliments had made it her favorite. Then there was the matter of taking the gold slippers to the shoe repairman and watching him shake his head sadly but promising to try.

Add to that the beauty parlor appointment; keeping Johnny's accounts straight and worrying about the depletions caused by his night life with the Cornell; ordering records from Salt Lake City; rehearsing the three songs over and over after learning that these were what Roger expected her to do on the first night; selling records, packing them for the juke boxes and trying to calm down impatient clients who almost tearfully complained that if Johnny didn't get them in working order they'd throw them out of the joint.

On Monday morning, her life having been further complicated by dates four nights running with Roger, she rose and went to take her place in line for the Knott bathroom. Two girls, one very definitely not born the blonde she was and the other not as red-headed, preceded her. Absently she listened to the conversation. The first said:

"Well, honey, eleven more days, and I hate to face that judge."

"Me, I got two weeks to go," said the red-head. "I wouldn't worry any. My lawyer says his honor's so busy they just rush you through, like maybe getting an auto tag."

The blonde sighed.

"Well," she said, philosophically, "I guess I can go through anything to get rid of that dopey bohunk I'm married to."

The door to the bathroom opened, a blonde came out, and the pair went in together, the red-head announcing that Joe was very cute, he was coming up to marry her as soon as the judge made her free from Art. Lela could hear them jabbering through their toilette. They finally came out and she rushed through her turn, went back to her room, pulled on worn gray slacks, her fast-disintegrating sport oxfords and a white blouse. She tied the green kerchief around her hair—for luck. She'd worn it when she'd met Johnny. Then she grabbed orange juice and a cup of coffee at the Owl Lunch and hurried to the shop.

She found Johnny huffing and puffing and wrestling with the recorder.

"It doesn't look very portable," she told him, by way of greeting. He looked up at her, wiped sweat from his dirty face. "What're you going to do with it?"

"Don't be a dope!" he exclaimed. "I'm taking it out to the Navajo-Brentmore to record you. Think, woman! You're a smash hit at the place. People hear you. I make a record. 'So-and-so, sung by Lela Main.' I put it on the juke boxes. Then—"

"Then," finished Lela, "people will rush to the juke boxes gasping 'How that girl can sing!' and you become the king of the roost. Nickels pour into the boxes—"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Quarters!" Johnny corrected. "The way you're going to sing it, they'll play it five times."

He removed his hat, scratched his head and gave the recorder a venomous look.

"However, Miss Merman, or Miss Shore, or whatever your name is," he muttered, "if your performance is going to be timeless, you've got to forget you're a star and help me put this recorder on the dolly."

"I'm your slave," she replied. "Let's go."

They wrested the machine onto the wheeled platform, pushed it to the curbing and loaded it onto the motor-tricycle. Johnny lashed it firmly, climbed on behind, started the engine and waved his arm, yelling:

"Here's to fame and fortune!"

Lela crossed her fingers and, as she walked back into the shop, she muttered:

"I hope so."

QUICKLY the exciting and busy hours and minutes pushed the hands of her wristwatch ahead to five o'clock. She closed the shop, then, and on feet that tapped cloud tops hurried to Mrs. Knott's, got her gown, which she had left hanging there to keep wrinkles from it, her slippers and her make-up kit. She returned to the shop, put on the time-worn finery and waited.

Roger Tucker arrived in his coupe at six-thirty, smiling, confident and encouraging, whisked her out the strip to the Last Frontier for supper.

"You look wonderful!" he told her, as he kissed her lightly. "Your outfit's just the thing—class and torch at the same time."

"Don't look too closely," she warned him. And she added to herself that maybe after a few weeks she'd have enough money to replenish her wardrobe somewhat, after she'd helped Johnny out of his hole.

Roger chided her, almost possessively, over her failure to more than sample the food, a fresh shrimp cocktail, rare roast beef, a chef's salad which would have tasted, under other circumstances, delicious. She thought of the hungry days of just a few weeks ago and was ashamed of herself.

"It can't be done," she told him. "I'm as jittery as a boxer before a championship fight."

They danced and, after that, went to the Navajo-Brentmore. Roger took her into a side entrance and she found herself in a corridor behind the night club stage with rooms on either side. He stopped before a door, opened it, and proudly told her:

"All yours!"

She felt he had reason to be proud, after her long sessions with drafty, dirty and illy-equipped dressing rooms. This had everything from pastel walls and indirect lighting to a chaise longue and a modernistic dressing table. She showed her appreciation so thoroughly that Roger enjoyed it almost as much as she did, kissed her, and then looked at his watch.

"Just half an hour," he said.

She put her arms around her as if a cold draft was blowing through the room.

"I'll be ready," she promised.

There wasn't much for her to do. She touched up her make-up and was combing her hair when she heard the gathering of verbal storm clouds. Gail Cornell's voice was rising, stabbing viciously.

"I knew that something rotten was cooking when I saw Rog with her at Lacey's!" she heard the singer say. "It's too bad that guy has to get his music and his romances all tangled, but that little tramp isn't going to get away with singing here tonight!"

Lela looked up, realized that she had left her door half open.

She tried to get up and close it but weakness assailed her legs, her mouth and throat went dry and burned, and she had a feeling of complete unreality. This is it, she told herself, and I've got to lick it.

She heard Johnny's voice, low, remonstrating, soothing.

"Now, now, Gail, take it easy. She's on for only one night a week."

"That's what you think!" The Cornell's voice rose to washer-woman pitch and volume. "I know the routine. First it's one night, then it's every other night, and pretty soon she's got my job—and Roger."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

By pressing down with her hands on top of the make-up table Lela managed to get to her feet. But she didn't reach the door.

"You wanted the night off," Johnny reminded Gail.

Lela heard the rush of feet in the hall and saw a tuxedoed figure pound purposefully by. Then Roger's voice, no more than a hoarse whisper:

"Take it easy, Gail! We can hear you clear out on the bandstand."

"Do you think I care?" Gail was screaming now. "You, you dirty bum! You baton waving lug! You haven't even the decency to take my spot and give it to a name. You pick a little unknown, just to shame me and make a fool of me, and make me look cheap!"

LELA heard the sound of a scuffle and then Gail burst into her room. She managed enough strength to turn around and face the onslaught.

"As for you!" Gail exploded, "Here's what I think of you, ruining my life!"

Lela was too shaken, too miserable, to dodge the vicious slap, as fast and hard as the strike of a snake. Gail's hand hit her on the lower part of the jaw and throat. Johnny closed in, grabbed Gail's arms, pinned them behind her and propelled her from the room. Gail was raging, hysterical, now. Johnny slammed his hand across her mouth as he removed her forcefully, almost viciously.

She felt Roger's arms around her, heard his voice:

"It's all right, darling. Everything's all right." His tone soothed. "I wouldn't have had this happen for the world."

Her strength began to come back. It always did. But strength wasn't all she needed.

"It's too late, Rog," she said, her voice a hoarse rasping whisper. "I won't be able to sing."

He tried a reassuring chuckle.

"Of course you can! Come across the hall. There's a small rehearsal room. We'll get rid of this in a minute. I'll play."

Lela, the sting of the slap still on her throat and cheek, let him lead her into the rehearsal room, his arm around her waist. She leaned against the piano as he ran through the first bars of "Begin The Beguine." She tried to smile.

I've got to sing, Lela told herself. This means everything to me and to Roger. I can't run out on him. I can't leave him without a singer. I can't ruin his show.

She tried. The noise she made was a hoarse, crackling caricature of a voice. A ghastly thing. Roger stopped playing, looked up at her, bewildered, realizing now the extent of the shock she'd received. There was complete sympathy, a plea in his face.

"Try again," he urged.

"I can't," she said, her voice half between a whisper and a normal tone. "It's happened before, Roger. The last time was in Hollywood. I was about to sing in a night spot when a fight broke out at a table close to me. Two men over a girl. One hit the other and he fell down. The girl dived at him and he fell backward against me. My throat and mouth went dry. I couldn't do anything but croak and I was fired. That's why I'm here, Roger."

"Look, darling!" he said, desperately. "For your sake and mine you've got to make it!"

He rose from the bench, put his arm around her.

"Come on back to your room." He glanced at his watch. "I can stall for half an hour. Lie down and rest. You'll be all right."

She followed him to the chaise longue in her room. She lay down. Roger asked if there was anything he could get for her. Maybe a drink would help. She shook her head. He left, on tip-toe, switching off the light as he went.

Lela lay there in the darkness, knowing that it was no use. The last time, the strange seizure had lasted for hours. There was nothing she could do. She'd failed again, failed herself, Roger, and Johnny. Panic took hold of her as she realized the enormity of what she had done. All she was good for was changing records in juke boxes, selling them, adding and subtracting in simple columns!

She rose then, weary and crushed and miserable.

She packed and closed her make-up

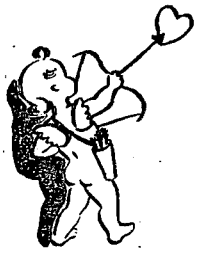
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

kit, after getting a couple of dollars out of it. She hurried down the corridor, out to side entrance. She rounded the spectacular building, looking up at it as if it was a stranger, aloof. She hailed a taxi and climbed into it.

"Mrs. Knott's," she told the driver. She had a long, tiresome day ahead, and needed sleep if she could get it. That escape would replace the wine of triumph!

CHAPTER V

You Never Know



FOLLOWING a restless and a semi-sleepless night, Lela dragged her tired body to the shop, knowing that here was the fatigue of failure rather than any physical exhaustion. She walked like a person trudging up a hill and opened the place forlornly to find that Johnny, for the first time, wasn't there—just when she needed him.

She plunged into work to forget the night before, and an hour or more had passed when she heard the impudent blat of the motor tricycle. She turned from packaging record changes for the juke boxes to see the vehicle chug to the curbing, loaded with the recorder, which gave her a jabbing reminder of defeat. Johnny left the seat, came inside. He was whistling, and Lela, with a start recognized the tune of "Take Me or Leave Me." The vigorous rendition stopped and the pucker went out of his lips as he faced her. His eyes and boyish features became solemn.

"Hi, Lee!" he managed. "I'm sorry about last night."

"Forget it, Johnny," she replied, her voice still sandy. "What's dood is dood—or dead. Did Roger get by all right?"

To her surprise a grin pushed away his funereal look.

"I'll say he did. The gal was terrific."

"Who?" asked Lela, gulping down her surprise.

"The Cornell, of course. That flare-up of hers did wonders for her. She went out there mad, full of emotion and 'I'll show 'em'. She knocked 'em cockeyed."

Lela decided that fate was laying it on to heavy.

"What numbers?"

"Yours. 'Begin' and 'To Each' and 'Take Me.' Boyohboyohboy! The customers stamped and cheered and banged glasses and others came in from the bar and the casino. It was a near riot. She had to sing 'Take Me' three times before they'd shut up."

"My song," Lela said, dismally, resenting Johnny's happiness.

"Yeah. And that isn't all. When the Cornell decided that Rog was tossing her she finally signed that contract to record for me, the one I've been trying to get for weeks. I've got her exclusive for five years." His voice dropped. "But no orchestra."

Lela swallowed the roughness out of her throat.

"You'll get one. I'm glad for you, Johnny," she said.

"Wait'll you hear the platters."

Johnny started for the door to get them but never got there. Roger Tucker's coupe lashed to a stop at the curbing and he piled out, grabbing some papers. On his heels was the Cornell, strangely looking happy, Lela thought. Everyone was happy, excepting her self. Johnny was at the door, opening it, when Tucker reached it. It nearly pressed him into a pancake against the wall. Tucker came right at Lela, wildly waving the papers.

"Where did you get this song, 'Take Me or Leave Me?'" he demanded, angrily. "You've got me in a horrible jam. The society of composers has had me on the telephone from New York demanding who wrote it. They say there's no J.B.N. Lee."

Lela, with heart that could sink no farther, looked at the papers he was shaking. They were the score sheets she'd given him. She could see the printing: *Words and Music by J.B.N. Lee.*

"You know what you've done!" Tucker blazed. "That song went out nationally last night—hit a couple of hundred stations, including New York. Right now, I'm sunk. The columnists and the music publishers and everybody else'll

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

say that I stole a song an unknown had written!"

"Maybe it won't be the first time," said Johnny, who had come from behind the door into the circle.

While Roger Tucker was trying to find words to answer this crack, Johnny was asking Lela: "Who is J.B.N. Lee?"

"I really went over," Gail said, to anybody who might be listening.

Tucker blurted: "If I can find this Lee character I'll give him a thousand dollars. I'll do anything to square myself. He can ruin me!"

"Just a minute, Tucker," Johnny said. "You'll give a thousand dollars to nobody. That song's worth plenty more than that."

GAIL interrupted him. "I'll say it is!" she burst out. "Roger's been going crazy ever since eight o'clock with those publishers calling up one after another —Paris Publishing, DeLarms, Whitman, Jason, Willington and Finder—all the top ones!"

"Shut up!" Tucker threw it at her so hard it left her mouth open.

"Look, Tucker," said Johnny. "I'll tell you who wrote that song as soon as you agree to sign an exclusive recording contract with me, you and your orchestra. You'll also get a small percentage of royalties on it. I'll—Lela and I'll agree to give you an exclusive vocal on it for Gail. Now if you'll see my lawyer, Blade, in the Fremont building, everything will be fine."

"Okay!" roared Tucker. "Okay! Now who in the devil's J.B.N. Lee?"

It was Lela's scratchy voice which gave the answer.

"J.B.N. Lee is Johnny Bangs and Lela Main, sort of boiled down. I've had it copyrighted, Johnny."

"See here, darling!" Johnny snapped. "I didn't have anything to do with it. All I did was take that record you made out to Tucker and let him play it."

Lela was smiling now. "That's not all, Johnny," she told him. "You gave me the title and the inspiration and made it easy."

Johnny snapped at Tucker: "Okay, go see the lawyer. We'll be up in a couple of minutes."

Tucker nodded, put his arm around Cornell and propelled her out of the shop. Johnny and Lela looked after them.

"Peace go with them, at last," Johnny said. "I hope they get smart and marry."

"You—what?" asked Lela. "Of all the Casanovas, you give in the easiest."

"Casanova, heck! I was just trying to get her name on that exclusive recording contract. How can I make records without a voice?"

"You've got something there," Lela told him. "And now you're all set, voice, orchestra and—"

"Not quite. There's you. I suppose the torch'll burn out some day."

"What torch?"

"Mine for you. But in a couple of weeks you'll be on your way to some guy, completely divorced and free."

"Divorced? Are you crazy, Johnny?"

"Not quite. Everybody knows that Mrs. Knott caters only to babes up here to take the cure, and I mean babes. Dames who don't know their own minds, who get divorces like dog tags, and then rush off to the new guy. I began to think it was Roger, but now I don't know."

Lela heard the sound of her own hoarse laughter. At the same time she was remembering the letter of her twice-divorced room-mate to Mrs. Knott, realizing that that worthy took it for granted that she was in Las Vegas to sever her matrimonial ties, which didn't and never had existed.

"Stupe," said Lela, "I'm just a single gal, trying to get along in the world."

"Holy mud!" exclaimed Johnny, only he didn't quite get the mud out clearly. He was too busy kissing Lela.

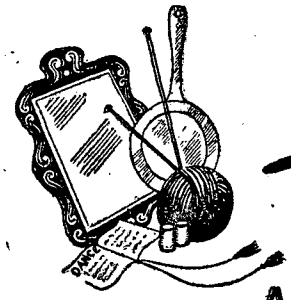
Finally, he said: "Look, Lela, this is terrific. You'll make thousands off 'Take Me or Leave me.' We organize, equal partners. We've got our start now, with Tucker's band and Cornell. With you around, just try to hold me down! A Bangs-Main record on every phonograph and juke box in the country. Royalties—" He paused.

"Written any more songs?"

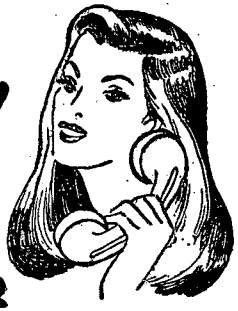
"Plenty. But they aren't so good, maybe. I wasn't in love when I did them. Now, 'Take Me—' "

"Sure," said Johnny. a kiss muffling the word.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Listen, Girls!



A CHAT WITH THE EDITOR

IT'S no news that we dress to please the males. Even if you haven't a steady beau, isn't the thought behind each new dress this: I wonder if it will catch one?

Neither is it news that men are much more observant about women's clothes than given credit for. And here are some comments and observations from popular male actors. How do they strike you?

Randolph Scott hates what he calls feather dusters on the head or at the shoulder. Jangling jewelry is another peeve. For day

or evening clothes, he likes the tailored, simple things.

Joseph Cotten is delighted over the return of the longer skirt. He loathed the knee-length style.

Guy Madison, the teen-ager's dream boy, likes a girl to be feminine. He doesn't like girls to dress so much you can't think of anything but what they're wearing. Nor does he like girls who use so much perfume you want to get away from it.

Franchot Tone has a yen for the glamorous, mysterious look. But he thinks it takes real talent to wear that type of clothes and to know when to stop and not appear ludicrous instead of mysterious.

And for all males it can be said that they dislike over-dressing. They don't like a varied collection of jewelry worn all at the same time; they don't like perfume that sets one reeling; and they don't like dress extremes which make girls conspicuous and embarrass them.

It's a wise gal who picks her costumes and remembers these hints!

Make-up Cape

It may seem a bit early in the season to think about Christmas gifts but not if you have a long list and a slim budget. We know that many of the girls on your list would appreciate a make-up cape. It's a boon for office as well as at home. It serves as a protection at hair-washing time and hair combing time and it's just about perfect for "after five" use when even elaborate make-up jobs can be done without damaging street clothes.

Get some of that plastic film material which is now sold by the yard. Take a piece of fabric from 30 to 36 inches square and fold to form a triangle, with lower left corner of square meeting opposite upper right corner. Repeat again so that lower right corner meets upper left corner.

Starting at the point of the triangle, measure off 2½ inches along outside right edge. Mark this point with chalk or pencil. Make a similar point along left edge. Now cut between the two points in a circular fashion. This gives the neck opening. It can be cut to deeper requirements if necessary.

Next, round off lower edge of fabric to gain circular effect when cape is completed. Then fold back on cutting table upper left point of fabric. Cut front opening directly under center of upper thickness of material and you are ready for finishing.

An all-around ruffle is a smart trim. Cut

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

straight lengths of fabric two inches wide and twice the measurement of the length of the edges to be trimmed.

Bind neck opening, place button and loop at neck to hold cape in place and the project is completed. A further decorative effect can be given by stitching the binding around the cape where ruffling and cape edge meet.

That New Look

Designers are letting it be known that with the first frost will come that "new" look. For instance, the skirt that looked shockingly long a few weeks ago will seem barely long enough for modesty—let alone grace. The fact has been established that the shortest possible hemline will be 15 inches off the floor—and more often, it's longer. The whole scheme has been designed to make you look like a different woman.

We love the new circular skirts that are so wonderfully wide you can't possibly stretch them out to their full measure. Quite a change after the straight-line skirts of war-time restrictions. You'll see lots of these for day-time wear. The dress tops have well-defined waists and simple bodices with high necklines and long sleeves.

Lots of hip interest in the new clothes, with concentration on peplums, folded pocket effects that flare out, wide insets of contrasting material such as grosgrain or taffeta,

You'll get little more than a lettuce leaf in your diet if you want to wear some of the draped, wrapped satins shown in the handsome metallic tones.

Cowl effect is another device to add to the full, free look.

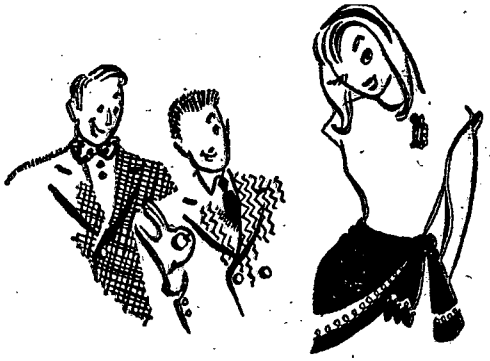
You'll see the longer look to suit jackets and, sometimes, the very small waisted, rounded hip and flare jacket hemline—a flare more accentuated than you're accustomed to seeing on tailored suits.

The full, swinging coat is one of the season's highlights—with some coats using as much as 3½ or 4 yards of material to get that new look.

Apron front dresses will be popular for dress-up occasions. You'll find lots of jet embroidery, too; the Gibson girl look in velvet skirts and full sleeved blouses; black lace over tweed in the evening jacket parade; wool insets as trim for crepe dress; and rounder shoulders with a softer look but retaining some padding.

Correct Your Feature Faults!

Pretty up for the parties that come with the holiday season. There isn't a man alive who doesn't want his gal to be the prettiest within miles. And when you're dating, don your prettiest frock and add something colorful—a bright scarf, a new piece of jewelry—



something to make him really look at you. And then hold his attention with a prettier face than you've had in ages.

How? By minimizing your feature faults. Your tools for this sorcery are two shades of powder—one a trifle darker than your natural coloring and the other a light, lively pink shade.

Now take a good look at yourself to determine your feature faults. Not a bad face is it, but your chin—isn't it a trifle too pointed? Press the darker shade of powder onto your face. Make this an all-over application. Then, using a fluffy powder puff, dust the pink, lighter colored powder over your jawbones.

If you've done a careful job of powdering, you should have a broadened effect at the jawline, and a better balanced face in general.

Perhaps you're trying to combat a "moon-face." Apply your dark powder and be lavish with it on the outer cheek—near the ear. Now, using the lighter powder, blend a little of it on the center of your forehead, the tip of your nose and your chin. These highlights distract attention from the sides of your face.

And here's what to do for a long, narrow face. Apply your dark powder with special emphasis on the forehead and chin. The lighter powder goes over the bridge of your nose, along the cheekbone out toward the top of the ear.

Square-jawed? Make it less obvious by placing several layers of your dark powder on the jawbone, from the tip of your earlobe

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

almost to the center of your chin. On the center of the chin and up toward the mouth, blend on the light powder.

Good Grooming Tips

Good grooming is the basis for all beauty. And it starts right in your closet. Have skirt hangers for skirts and slacks, heavy wooden hangers for suits and coats and padded hangers for dresses. Keep blouses on hangers to preserve their freshness and prevent stain on seams.

Never hang a dress in the closet immediately after removing it from your body. Suspend it on a hanger on the outside of the closet door—if you can't find some breezy spot for its airing.

Mending is an awful bore if you let it accumulate. The thing to do then is to keep a well-equipped mending box handy with thread in various colors and all the other gadgets, such as extra buttons, snaps, etc. When you take something off that has a split seam or a button half off, repair it before you put it away.

Even new clothes often need checking. The seams may not be deep enough to hold. So take a slightly deeper seam and stitch carefully so that it will not pull out at an embarrassing moment.

Rows of buttons on ready-made clothes are often sewn with the same piece of thread. Don't risk losing buttons you won't be able to match. Sit down and sew one separately and singly.

A good rule to follow when washing all woolens, sweaters or stretchy material is to treat them gently. Measure them before washing and pull them gently into shape during the drying and pressing.

Those ruffly jabots and dickies that add so much to a suit or dress can only do a top-flight job of it if they are immaculate. This trick is a good one: half fill a screw top jar with warm, soapy water. Put the article into the jar, cover tightly and shake. This does a good washing job and is easy on delicate threads. Rinse with clear water in the jar and blot out in a Turkish towel before ironing.

For the shine that sometimes develops on suede, try this: first brush the shoes, bag or belt to remove loose dust. Next wipe with a piece of Turkish toweling dampened with cleaning fluid. Keep cleaning fluid far from flame, of course. Then hold the suede over the spout of a boiling kettle or steam iron for a moment, turning to reach all parts.

Handy Hints

Neither jewelry nor highly tinted nails will make ugly hands beautiful. Grace is what makes your hands lovely. And if you weren't born with graceful hands, you can exercise them into grace and loveliness.

For reducing chubby fingers—draw your fingers until your hand resembles a claw. Tense the fingers until they vibrate. Then relax. They will tingle and glow with circulation.

For flexible fingers—sit on the floor cross-legged. Holding arms straight, place them in front of you; turn the tips of the fingers toward the body. Place the palms flat on the

floor. Rock the hands forward to the tips of the fingers, down to the middle of the hand, and back on the heel of the hand again.

To relax and encourage circulation, shake the hands vigorously from the wrists, as if you were trying to shake them off. For deftness, take each finger separately with the fingers of the other hand and bend them backward until they ache. For gracefulness, hold the hands out in front of the body, palms down; clench them tightly, then relax the fingers, letting the hands hang from the wrists.

A Yummy Recipe

Don't know about you, but we really go for the kind of heroes Shirley Manners puts into her stories! The hero of Love Wears A Mask, in this issue, sure rates a rave!

We're also ga-ga about the kind of dinners Shirley serves at her house. With the holidays coming along, we thought you might

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

like her recipe for sweet potatoes to serve along with the bird.

Sweet Potato Puff

5 or 6 medium-sized sweet potatoes
2 eggs
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons melted butter
2 tablespoons hot milk

Boil the sweet potatoes. When tender remove the skins and any discolored portions and press the sweet potatoes through a ricer. There should be about one quart of the pulp. Beat the yolks and whites of the eggs separately. To the sweet potato add the yolks, butter, milk and salt. Beat well and fold in the well-beaten whites. Pile the mixture lightly into a greased baking dish and bake in a moderate oven (350 degrees F.) for 45 minutes or until light and fluffy.

Fit for a king! And we'll take another helping of your romantic heroes, too, Shirley.

An Ungraceful Habit

It's all right to swing it on a dance floor—but do you swing your coat in a wide arc over your head when putting it on? Like to play toreador? Or do you think you're flagging a train?

Watch yourself, darling. It's a most ungraceful habit. You look terrible while it's going on. Your dress hikes up, your skirt and blouse become distant relatives, your hair gets mussed—and by that time the whole glamor picture is ruined.

The proper way to put on a coat or jacket is simply to slip one arm in at a time, put your other arm down in back and nonchalantly slip into the second sleeve.

Personality Pointers

We talk about figures, faces, clothes, lovely hands, beautiful hairdos—but none of these will help if you lack poise and charm. Feel sure of yourself and look it. Shrinking violets don't get very far.

It's not very difficult to acquire a pleasing personality. Just forget that your hair is a mousy shade—you must have some other attribute to make up for it. Don't think that everyone is watching you with a critical eye. They're not. They have too many other things to think about.

So stop worrying about little deficiencies. Stand up to your audience. Talk up. Say something pleasant. Any good psychologist will tell you that people always like to hear pleasant things said about themselves.

Dress well. Be neatly groomed. Be conscious of your posture and bearing. And we promise you success!

Chit Chat From Here and There

Zaniest recording of the month is Jo Stafford's new platter, "Temptation". It's a cross between the corniest hill-billy band and Spike Jones' best. So different from the kind of thing Jo Stafford usually does. You'll want it for your collection.

Nice to see Clark Gable back on the screen again in "The Hucksters"—he's been away much too long. And a right fine job of acting he does, too, in this story that hit the best-seller list. Let's have more Gable, say we!

In addition to other complications, hair-stylists are making life even more complicated for us by telling us we should choose hats, dresses and accessories to suit our hair-dos! Quoth a famous comb and brush maestro—before buying a new dress, study your hairdo. If you're wearing a simple ingenue hairstyle, parted on the side and hanging softly to the shoulders, simplicity is your wardrobe keynote. Wear simple suits, fresh white blouses—berets, sweaters and skirts. If you wear pert bangs, suits with saucy peplums, off-the-face bonnets and shoulder strap bags are for you. Sophisticated clothes go with an upsweep. The feather cut is just right for the outdoor girl and she will look well in the new burnoose coats, shortie coats, colorful scarves, wide leather belts and small head-hugging hats.

The National Safety Council keeps very busy campaigning for safety in homes. And very smart of them, too! There are too many injuries in the home—most of them caused by carelessness. Outside and inside stairs should be well lighted. Paint top and bottom cellar step white. Keep polishing cloths and oily cloths in a covered metal can. Get rid of unnecessary things like old boxes, newspapers and unused old clothes. Use a small stepladder in closets and keep a flashlight close by for exploring shadowy recesses.

You know how exasperating it is to slip into your dress only to have a button pop or discover a dragging hem or seam peephole—especially when you're in a hurry. Why not keep a pincushion handy in your dresser drawer, complete with needles threaded with every color to match each dress and coat? Makes sense, doesn't it? Get in the habit of buying a matching spool of thread whenever you buy an off-shade frock.

If you must go to bed with your hair in curlers, why not be a cute Topsy? All the smart debs we know roll up their hair in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hankies, generously flowered ones, dampening them with cologne to give a sweet and heady air to curly locks. Nice for a dance date!

A Reducing Exercise

Watch a thick waistline go with this exercise!

Take a book and sit down on a stool or hard chair. Sit on the chair with your feet 12 inches apart. Pull your tummy in tight. Lean 'way over and place the book on the floor to the left of you as far from your feet as you possibly can. Come now, you can push it farther than that.

Now, sit up straight, take a deep breath. Pull your tummy in as tight as you can, lean over to the left, reach down and pick up your book. Repeat this book placing exercise to the right. Do it about ten times each day.

Do You Know—

That a liquid-cream foundation is often most advisable for oily skin?

That if skin and hair are dry you should increase consumption of food fats and oils?

That when eyes are small or deep-set, mascara should be used only on the tips of the upper lashes?

That if you are a nail biter, wearing false nails will discourage the practice?

NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

A warm breeze blew against Joan Denning's face, but it felt like a cold gust of wind as she walked up and down in front of the fountain. She thought, "This can't be the last afternoon that I'm to meet Kirk here, the last time we can ever really be together."

The park was thronged with people but she saw him coming toward her. Usually she would have made sure that her mouth was glistening bright with lipstick, her shining black hair that streamed to her shoulders was in neat order. But now nothing seemed to matter except that their happiness was in danger.

"Joan!" His voice reached her, his strong bronzed hands were held out to her. "Joan —Joan darling," he drew her close to him, his lips seeking hers, but she drew away, crying.

"No—no—Kirk—I'm afraid someone will see us."

"Maybe it would be better if they did. Then we'd have the courage to face Marcella, to tell her the truth about us," he said vehemently.

"It isn't a matter of courage, you know that!" Her voice was low and anguished. "There's our loyalty to Marcella as well as ourselves."

Because of a tragic situation over which they had no control, Joan and Kirk found themselves facing a grievous problem which threatened to separate them forever. How they coped with the situation is told in ONE HEART WAITED, the thrilling, throbbing novelet by Jerrold Beim featured in next month's issue. It's a dramatic romance that will hold you spellbound as you, like the hero and heroine, look for the bright ray of sunshine that will dispel the clouds of despair.

Also in the next issue—BLOCK THAT BLONDE, a swift-moving, scintillating novelet by Jean Francis Webb. It's a yarn with a college football background, colorful and entrancing from the first page to the last.

In BLOCK THAT BLONDE you'll meet Colleen Tyler, the blonde in question, who is a Senator's daughter—and an assortment of handsome male football stars whom you'll be glad to know. It's a Rah, Rah Romance of college days and daze—with plenty of good old sentiment to sweeten the dish.

Our varied fiction menu for next month's issue also includes many short stories of love by your favorite writers. In addition, a goodly assortment of interesting departments. Let's meet then—and meanwhile, do turn to my Charm Column on Page 113 for my personal answers to readers' queries, won't you? Thank you, girls!

LOVE HAS WINGS, a Complete Romantic Novel by EDWARD CHURCHILL—plus stories by Helen Ahern, Ruth Anderson, Cylvia S. Elvay and others—in the November issue of our companion magazine EXCITING LOVE—now on sale, 15c at all stands!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chip was begging her to open her eyes

The Girl for Chip

By VIRGINIA GALE

Sally chooses a hazardous way of proving to a man that he loves her more than he loves the memory of another!

ALL winter long Sally dispatched her duties as Mr. Reddingale's secretary with patient efficiency. But the moment the sap ran high in the trees, her blood pressure followed, and the constricting boundaries of Belleau Falls pinched her emotions like a pair of tight shoes.

It was one of those warm, spring Saturday afternoons, when rug-beating and dismantling a house becomes a vocation. Sally came home to find her aunt and uncle waging a vigorous war against cold weather grime.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She sighed sorrowfully. "There goes my half-holiday," she thought.

Making her presence known, she started upstairs reluctantly to change her clothes.

"There's a letter on the hall table for you, dear," Sarah Maynard called.

Sally dashed back down the steps, and a moment later emitted a wild shriek.

"What on earth!" exclaimed Mrs. Maynard, appearing suddenly.

"Somebody die?" Sally's uncle asked unimaginatively.

Sally regarded the couple with a triumphant tilt of her head. "I told you college friendships never desert you," she said. "Ruth Colby wants me to come to Florida. She has a job lined up for me."

"What doing?" Uncle Lou demanded wryly. "Taming alligators?"

Sally shot him a pained look, and, swirling her pleated skirt in an arc, flung herself down into a chair. Excitement made a radiant oval of her face. Her chestnut brown eyes were already searching far beyond the horizon of Belleau Falls.

"Gird yourself for battle," she thought, her lips becoming firm. And in the face of all argument, she maintained stoutly that a girl needed travel, fresh contacts, to broaden her.

"But, Florida," Mrs. Maynard remarked naively, "is jungle country. It's dangerous."

"Ruth," Sally reminded her gently, "hasn't succumbed."

"But Ruth is married."

"Darling, what protection is a husband, when he's with an occupational unit in Germany?" Sally laughed fondly. "You'll have to do better than that. Besides, I'll be living with Ruth and her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Allen are chaperonage at its peak."

FURTHER protests came and went in jumbled confusion, ending up with Uncle Lou's terse observation.

"There are plenty of smart young men in Belleau Falls, if it's romance you're pining for. You don't have to go to Florida."

But Uncle Lou had never danced until ten o'clock curfew with a bespectacled bank clerk who accounted for his existence by relating local gossip. Or Ted Cramer who brought his real estate worries to the Young People's meetings. After all, how could an energetic young man make a fortune selling property in a town which had movies only twice a week.

Sally appealed to her aunt. Hadn't Aunt Sarah ever longed to expand? Was she, Sally, unreasonable to want a touch of adventure before she married and settled down? One look at the older woman's softened eyes and understanding smile clinched Sally's case.

"The Saunders prove my contention that this town needs several more horses to put it on the map," Sally said later. She took her head despairingly. "Wintering in Florida is traditional. The Saunders spend their summers in the South. If that isn't rural!"

However, this same idiosyncrasy served Sally well. For on the first week in June, when the Saunders' station wagon hit the highway, Sally was an eager third passenger. And by the time they crossed the Florida line, she was in a glowing state of excitement.

At Miami, she and the Saunders parted company.

"The trip was wonderful," she said and thanked them gratefully.

"You've been a lively companion, my dear," Mrs. Saunders assured her. Then her smooth brow wrinkled. "Are you sure it wouldn't be better for you to stay overnight here, and start for Tamokolee in the morning?"

"Oh, I'll be there by sundown," Sally replied. "I wrote Ruth the day before I left that you were driving me this far, and that I'd make the rest of the way by bus."

"But this fishing camp of theirs," Mrs. Saunders persisted. "It's some miles inland from Tamokolee, isn't it?"

"Yes, but they must have some sort of transportation out to their place." Sally smiled confidently. "I'll be all right. Don't worry."

But as the bus traveled the miles over the Old Connor Highway, and she got her first look at the Everglades country, she was not quite so optimistic.

"It looks so desolate," she thought, "and creepy."

Still, any place was better than Bel-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leau Falls. So she turned unprejudiced eyes on the huge cypress trees, with gray moss trailing groundward like long Van Dyke beards. Scrub pines supported a heavenly blue sky, now streaked with shades of fuchsia and gold by the setting sun. The more she watched, the more intrigued she became by its beautiful wildness.

Presently, the bus driver called over his shoulder to her. "This is where you get off, lady."

Sally took two small bags from the rack above her head, and, once outside, waited while the driver removed her airplane luggage from the baggage compartment.

Not until the bus pulled away did she fully take stock of her surroundings. There were perhaps a dozen houses, two gas stations, and a building that looked as if it might be a store-lunchroom. Leaving her luggage under the small shed where the bus had stopped, she approached the store.

"How do I get to Moon Lake?" Sally asked the pretty blonde girl behind the lunch counter.

"Allen's fishing camp?"

Sally nodded, and the girl smiled. "Most people have their own cars. It's a long walk. Ten miles."

"But I have to get there this evening," Sally protested, her throat becoming a little dry.

The blonde girl looked over to where a young man sat, his head bent over a newspaper, one hand holding a mug of coffee.

She asked, "Know anybody who's driving over the Allen's way, Chip?"

"It must be his eyes that got him that nickname," thought Sally. For they truly resembled chips of bluest sapphire, sparkling and steady.

"Not offhand, I don't," he replied. Then, sensing Sally's dismay, he asked, "You bound for there?"

"Yes. I thought surely I could get transportation."

WITH a heavy sigh, Chip rose and came toward her, muttering something about silly tourists. Aloud, he said, "I can drive you."

It was a tempting offer, but Sally hesitated. And Chip, intercepting her wary look, turned to the girl behind the counter.

"Can you get away, Grace?" he inquired, smiling slightly. "The young lady doesn't know me."

"You bet," Grace accepted spontaneously.

No doubt this Chip What's-his-name had the feminine population of Tamokolee—few as that might be—jumping through hoops.

"That girl," Sally told herself, "bounded from behind the counter like an eager beaver."

Not that Sally blamed her. For there was something about the tanned face, beneath sun-streaked light brown hair, that made Sally wonder how a good-looking, man-of-the-world type like Chip ever found himself tucked away in Tamokolee. She began to regard him as one of the better aspects of the Everglades.

Presently they all piled into a car with a broken windshield, which looked and sounded like a concrete mixer.

"Not much on face," he grinned apologetically, "but it takes to sand like a prairie dog."

The ride into the deepening dusk was lonely. For Sally was just a passenger, and the young couple in front were friends. However, the thought of seeing Ruth again, and sitting cross-legged on the bed talking, as they had in college, heartened her immeasurably, and she answered politely whenever she was spoken to.

Finally the car wound around into a clearing bounded by tall pines, and Sally caught her breath. A paradise was mild, alongside of the moonlit lake that shimmered through the trees. Dotted about the clearing were silhouetted cabins, and to the left was a two-story log house with lights blinking cheerily.

It was in front of the latter that Chip stopped. Immediately the porch light came on, and Sally saw Mr. Allen standing on the steps.

She jumped out of the car, and ran up to him.

"Sally!" he cried, delighted. "We didn't know when you'd get here." He peered into the darkness at the young man pulling Sally's luggage from the back of the car. "That you, Chip?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"How are you, Mr. Allen?"

"Glad you got Miss Burton here safe and sound. Mighty nice of you."

While Chip brought the bags to the porch, Sally stood by impatiently, waiting for Ruth to appear.

In parting, she held out her hand to Chip, smiling. "You see," she told him, "I'm no silly tourist. I'm going to live here."

"That's fine," he replied impersonally. "I hope you like it."

The car drove off, and Sally followed Mr. Allen into the house. Mounted fish, rods and reels, all sorts of fishing tackle lined the walls of the long living room, which was paneled with knotty pine. At one end was an enormous fireplace. Mrs. Allen was just coming down the stairs.

"You poor child," she said, hugging Sally warmly. "If we'd known when to expect you, we could have met you in Miami."

"Oh, it doesn't matter," Sally laughed, beginning to relax. "I'm here now, and I love it." She looked about eagerly, adding, "I'm dying to see Ruth."

A brief look passed between Mr. and Mrs. Allen.

"Well, now—nothing to stop us from sitting down, is there?" the man said. When they were comfortable, he went on. "I have some disappointing news for you, Sally. Ruth isn't here."

NO DOUBT their daughter had written Sally that she hoped eventually to join her husband in Germany. Yes, Ruth had written that, Sally acknowledged, bewildered.

"It all came about very suddenly," Mrs. Allen said. "There's so much red tape about such things that Ruth was sure she would be here for months yet. But a letter came out of the blue saying that she could leave immediately. You had already left, Sally, by the time word reached us saying you were driving down."

Sally listened with a sinking heart. She could almost hear Uncle Lou's delighted chuckle when she strolled into the Maynard living room.

"I told you it was a crazy idea," he would say smugly. "Now maybe you'll settle down and be satisfied."

"But I won't!" she cried now, inwardly. "I'll never be happy in Belleau Falls."

The Allens were instantly aware of Sally's rebellion. Mr. Allen laughed. "Those wheels of yours are working so fast they're steaming up my glasses, honey. Ruth was terribly concerned. She said you probably had to do some tall talking to convince your aunt and uncle."

A deep sigh shook Sally's white-bloused shoulders. "You have no idea."

"Well, don't worry, dear," Mrs. Allen said comfortingly. "You won't have to go back, unless you want to. Ruth left a letter of introduction to Mr. Cronin over at the Cypress Mill. With Ruth gone they're even more shorthanded."

Mr. Allen nodded. "It might be a little dull for you around here with Ruth away, but you'd be a tonic for us."

Sally was certain she would have difficulty in reconciling her feeling of strangeness, and so sleep. But the warm air fluttering the window curtains, the exotic scent of native plants, lulled her almost immediately. She dozed off wondering if she would see Chip again, and if her dazzling smile had really left him as unimpressed as it appeared.

The following morning she was up early.

"I'll drive you over to the mill, Sally," Mr. Allen offered at breakfast. And a short time later, she was sitting in the car beside him, a neat little figure in a soft yellow sports dress. Her hair was brushed smooth, its ends curling naturally.

"Ruth used to drive back and forth with Chip Severin," Mr. Allen said conversationally.

Sally was pleasantly surprised.

That must mean, she reflected, that Chip worked at the mill, too. She smiled to herself.

"I guess I'll have to make a similar arrangement if I can," she thought. "The Allens are doing enough already, without imposing on them."

The building which housed the commercial activities of the Tamokolee Cypress Mill was of sturdy construction, white, with a gleaming aluminum roof. Viewing it, Sally fought down the nervous little tremor in her stomach.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Where can I find Mr. Cronin?" she inquired, once inside.

She followed the directions given her, and in a few moments was ushered into a second floor office. Mr. Cronin offered a friendly hand, when she introduced herself. He laid the letter she handed him to one side, unopened.

"Ruth and I had quite a talk about you, Miss Burton." He smiled pleasantly. "She used all sorts of superlatives in vouching for you."

Sally quailed, wondering if she could uphold the extravagant recommendation Ruth had given her. But she hid her timidity behind a smile.

"Ruth suggested," Mr. Cronin continued, "that you might be able to assume her duties. We have some fine girls here, but most of them aren't qualified assistants. Think you can handle it?"

Before Sally could say she was willing to try, a disheveled head appeared through the doorway.

"Come in, Chip," Mr. Cronin invited. "I want you to meet your new assistant."

Sally's heart jumped happily, as Chip nodded agreeably in her direction.

"You two have met?" asked Mr. Cronin.

Sally laughed. "Mr. Severin mistook me for a tourist last evening, and lent a hand."

"Oh, Chip has his generous side," smiled Mr. Cronin. "You go along with him, Miss Burton, and he'll explain your duties."

When they were out in the hall, Chip spoke easily.

"I have to check out one of the field groups. Come on."

SALLY followed him through a corridor which led to an annex. Over in one corner of an assembly room waited a group of men of various ages and appearance. Chip introduced Sally to them.

"This is one of the crews that drop the trees," he explained to her.

One dark-haired young man grinned at Sally. "We come in half dozens, like doughnuts." Without embarrassment, he flung a welcoming arm about Sally's shoulders, announcing, "Boys, this is the fanciest little number the old man upstairs has brought to the plant yet." He growled, crouching with a pretense of animal ferocity. "Let me at those trees. I'll mow 'em down like toothpicks."

The men laughed.

"I'll bet a good many hearts are going to bust over our assistant boss, eh?" the young fellow added.

"Okay, Joe," Chip broke in sternly, "that's enough clowning."

Joe pulled away from Sally, chuckling. "There's one heart she can't reach, isn't there, Chip?" he asked with raised eyebrows.

All the rest of the day, Sally conducted herself primly to offset the furore she had caused in the annex. Though Chip had said nothing, she sensed his disapproval, and she pondered various ways of forestalling the wolves in the future.

At closing time, Chip walked into the office. "How do you plan to get back to Moon Lake?" he wanted to know.

"Mr. Allen is calling for me."

"The mill runs a jitney for employees," Chip told her, "but it's mostly men who ride it."

"I see."

"If you like," he suggested, "you can make the run with me." He smiled grudgingly. "At least until your newness wears off. You seemed to go right to the hearts of our workers."

Sally lived in a realm of rosy excitement all the following day. She checked time sheets with methodical sureness. She typed letters without a flaw. But whenever Chip came in, she filed away his every look with even greater efficiency.

As she drove home with him that evening, he talked of this and that, then made a suggestion.

"I might be over your way later tonight. Full moon is good fishing."

"Maybe I'll see you then," Sally replied hopefully.

He hadn't enthused, but around eight o'clock he put in an appearance at the big log house, to pay his respects to Mr. Allen.

"Take any boat you want, Chip," Mr. Allen offered.

"Thanks."

Turning toward the door, Chip

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dragged Sally's heart after him.

"I hope you enjoy yourself," she called wistfully.

He whipped around, then his shoulders drooped with resignation.

"Okay, half-pint. Come along if you must."

Eagerly, Sally trudged along beside him. And she wisely refrained from asking stupid questions, as he rowed away from the dock.

The wind ruffled the water's surface into little ridges which, highlighted by the moon, looked like crinkly little smiles. Sally sat quietly in the bow of the rowboat, listening to Chip sing softly.

"That's a happy love song," she thought, recognizing the tune, "but he makes it sound so sad."

Several times she tried to start a conversation, but Chip, having anchored the boat in a cove, was unresponsive. Finally, in desperation, she blurted out her protest.

"Somebody did a good job on you."

"Who do you mean?" he asked curiously.

She sighed, tossing her hair into the wind.

"The girl who disappointed you."

"Who told you about Kay?" he demanded.

"Nobody."

"Then how did you find out?"

"From you, just now," she told him, adding, "Besides, it isn't natural for a man to take a girl rowing in the moonlight and practically ignore her, unless she's utterly impossible, or else he's nursing a broken heart."

She could see his face plainly. It was serious, almost grim.

"If you expect me to make love to you—" he flared up.

Sally stiffened, incensed. "Take me ashore," she ordered.

He glared at her through the moonlight.

"I'm fishing, squirt."

"Want me to swim?" she asked, furiously.

His temper matching hers, he reeled in his line, and threw the pole down into the bottom of the boat, muttering his disgust.

"Women! Rats!"

FOR almost a week, Chip maintained his studied aloofness. Then one noontime he spotted Sally in the cafeteria, alone, engrossed in a magazine. He took the chair opposite her without invitation.

"I'm ashamed," he burst out, when she looked up.

"How adolescent," she replied sweetly, returning to her reading.

She was exasperating him again.

"Well, what more do you want?" he demanded hotly.

"Not a thing that you have to offer."

Reluctantly, he tried again. "Look, I admit I was pretty rugged, but you infringed on a sore spot. I'm going to tell you about it, then maybe we can settle down and be normal, congenial friends."

There had been a girl, just after his discharge from service. He had met her at a party in Palm Beach, and a courtship followed.

"Being way down here, I couldn't get away to see her very often, and she decided to take a job at the mill, so that we could be engaged in the good old-fashioned way. The McCaffertys boarded her."

It was swell at first, he admitted. The fresh glow of new love offset Fay's distaste for the 'Glades. But after awhile she had started spending her weekends in Miami with relatives.

"Then one day," Chip went on, "she didn't come back. I knew where she was staying, so I went after her. She was nice enough about it, but insisted that her high heels sank too deeply in the muck down here."

If he had been willing to turn white-collar, he grimaced, the outcome might have been different. But Chip had said goodby, and sealed up the rent in his heart with plenty of hard work.

As he talked, Sally felt her resentment wane, and flurries of jealousy transplanted it. However, in between the two emotions Chip once more became the bright spot in her heart.

"Someday," she thought, "he'll forget her. I hope I'm around when he does."

The two of them had returned to work with a clear understanding. Chip even invited Sally to drive to Miami with him on Sunday to spend the day. That was some progress.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Maybe," she mused, "he intends to use me as a counterirritant to Fay." It wasn't a flattering thought, but Sally was counting on him not being as deeply hurt as he imagined.

He seemed in gay spirits as they set out early the following Sunday. Sally didn't crowd him, though she was ever conscious of his superb strength, the invigorating shades of his moods, the subtle promise in his blue eyes.

They joked and teased. They drifted into pleasant silences. And they chatted agreeably.

"Every section of Florida is different," Sally marveled.

"You feel it too?" he asked, brightening still more.

"Oh, yes."

"Wait until I teach you about the Everglades. Just going back and forth from the lake to the mill is merely scratching the surface."

She learned about egret birds from Chip. And about air orchids, which he pointed out enroute. And she felt excitement rise within her, as she contemplated the little adventures he planned.

When they reached Miami, he parked the car, and they window shopped, arm in arm.

"I'm starved, aren't you?" he asked presently.

"How about seafood?" Sally suggested.

He grinned enthusiastically. "I know where they serve lobsters as big as loggerheads."

Of course they held hands across the table, while they sipped after-dinner coffee. And of course it was merely a casual gesture. But not to Sally. She cherished these fragments of his attention.

After a movie, they strolled along the Boulevard, and scanned lovely Biscayne Bay from the seawall. Subconsciously his arm slipped about her waist. Scarcely daring to breathe, Sally let it remain. However, it must have had a nostalgic effect on Chip, for he pulled away abruptly and lit a cigarette with trembling fingers.

"Why does he have to put Kay Lawrence in my shoes all the time?" Sally thought miserably. "I feel like a ghost that comes around to haunt him."

THEIR return trip to Tamokolee was a total loss. Sally was unable to shake Chip from his pensive thoughts, and she felt rebellion prodding her good temper.

When they reached home, Chip said, "It's early. Want to sit by the lake for awhile?"

"What for?" Sally thought bitterly. "So you can dream of Kay?"

Nevertheless, they were soon sitting on the shore, their arms wrapped around their bent knees, two pairs of eyes searching the water for an answer to their unrest.

Finally Sally complained, "Silence is golden, but one can get too much of it," she said shortly.

Chip grunted, replied without turning his head, "I'm quite a problem to you, it seems."

"Not to me," she tossed back crisply. "To yourself. You insist upon browsing around in the corridors of a dead romance, and the air is beginning to stifle you. Pretty soon stagnation will set in, and no red-blooded girl will give you a tumble."

That jarred him, and he turned to look at her. Their eyes burned challengingly for a moment, then Chip pulled her roughly into his arms. Her hair fell in a soft cloud over the sleeve of his jacket, and she felt the muscular tenseness of his body as he tightened the embrace.

"Is this what you prescribe for an antidote?" he asked huskily, his lips almost touching hers.

Before she could answer, his mouth covered hers, and she felt the very earth slide from under them. A dreamy cloud, though, is feeble support, and Sally was abruptly dropped back into reality. Chip almost thrust her from him.

"I'm a fool," he muttered savagely. He rose, and pulled her to her feet. "I'm taking you back to the house."

He had seen her to the front door. And Sally had cried for a long time into her pillow. Chip was afraid to let himself go with her. He was sorry for that world-shaking kiss. To him it had been a kiss to end all kisses.

"He's not the type to go through life

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

alone," she argued stubbornly to herself. "He's sensitive, full of deep emotion. And somewhere in his heart there has to be room for me."

Several times during their Miami excursion she had surprised a softened look in his eyes. Each time the curtain had fallen, leaving him strong again.

Chip, she realized now, would require delicate handling. So she waited several days for him to sober up from his memory drunk, before asking:

"Feel like taking one of those exploring jaunts into the 'Glade that you promised, Chip?"

Chip regarded her suspiciously for a moment, and Sally laughed.

"I won't lecture. You just point out what a well-jungled girl ought to know, and I'll nod in astute silence."

In spite of himself, he grinned. "You're a funny little guy." He picked up an order blank pad from his desk. "I have to see a contractor, but I'll be back by quitting time. Then if you've powdered your nose and pinned back your ears, Professor Severin will hold class."

Promptly at five-thirty, Sally left the building.

"Chip stand you up?" yelled Joe, the comic who had been so forward the day of her arrival.

He was standing by the jitney talking to the watchman, who lived on the premises. She joined them.

"Don't tell me you're going to ride the jit," Joe remarked hopefully.

"Certainly not. I'm waiting for Chip to return." She turned to Matt Billings. "I saw a flowering tree from my window upstairs, and I'm going down the trail to investigate. If Chip comes before I get back, tell him to join me."

"Hey, Sally," Joe interposed gravely, "that idea's n.g."

Matt nodded in agreement. "The trail branches off in several directions after a piece, Miss Burton. It's mighty easy to get lost."

"Then I'll go just to the fork."

WAVING gaily, she wandered toward the gate which led from the fenced-in mill site to the heavy thickets of the 'Glades. Soon, she had hit the winding path.

In reality she was not in search of a flowering tree, but an answer to her problem. There was nothing like a solitary walk to clear one's brain. So she brought her troubles with her, in hopes of finding some solution in the hushed wilderness.

"People," she murmured analytically, "are motivated by numerous emotions. One of them must crack Chip's resistance."

There were greed and envy, love and hatred, fear— Fear. She had tried reasoning with Chip, unsuccessfully. High pressure made him stubborn. Yet he seemed always to be reaching for her, then smothering the impulse.

"If he became fearful for my safety, though—" she thought.

She stood by the fork, debating, and looking very tiny amidst the tangled web of palmettos, heavy vines, sprangling cypress and mangrove trees. If Chip thought she were lost— Well, a good scare *might* rouse him into some sort of action.

Deciding to leave a clue, so that he would know where to start looking, she dropped her silver vanity case in the middle of the path, then stepped deliberately off the trail. For about fifty yards, she left evidence of her direction. After that she proceeded more carefully. Secretly she felt some misgivings.

"But," she reflected philosophically, "at least I'll find out if there's a spark in his heart worth fanning."

Watching her bearings carefully, she came to a clearing where some trees had been dropped. She stood in the middle, fascinated. The shadows were deep, growth was thick and dark green around the edges of the open spot. Palm leaves rustled mysteriously. Its wild beauty matched her feeling of daring.

Suddenly, without warning, an enormous something zoomed past her head. Something with a bronze body, and bright head which rested on its neck like a crimson crown. Its widespread wings swirled the air like the wash from an airplane propeller. Without even waiting to see what it was, Sally turned quickly to retrace her step.

"This is getting too wild," she thought.

She moved swiftly, determined to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

find some other way of stirring Chip's emotions. But a few feet farther on, she stopped in horror at an ominous sound. Directly in front of her, coiled and glistening, she saw the dreadful thing.

"Oh, Chip!" she screamed. "It's a rattler. Please get me out of here."

Nothing but silence met her cries. As the snake moved its head back and forth threateningly, Sally turned in terror, and fled blindly. Tears blurred her eyes, so that she failed to notice the mangrove root that reached out like a talon to trip her. She was conscious only of sudden pain rocketing through her, and her ankle felt as if it were vised in a steel trap. Dazed, she realized that she was lying prone on the ground. She tried to rise, but sank back weakly.

"I can't go any farther. I'll have to wait for Chip," she whimpered, rubbing her rapidly swelling ankle.

Bewildered, she looked about, forced to admit that even if she could walk, she had no idea in which direction the trail lay. In her fear, she lost track of how far she had come. It seemed as though she had run for hours.

As the shadows grew more black, her heart swelled with dread, until she could feel it beating in her temples, in her throat, matching the throb in her ankle.

It was impossible to tell just how long it was before she heard—very faintly—the crackling sound of palmettos. It might be a wildcat, was her first thought. Or any kind of weird, vicious animal.

She peered tensely into the darkness, then suddenly cried aloud. "It—it has to be Chip!"

Hopefully, forgetful of her injured ankle, she tried to jump to her feet.

"Oh—oh, no!" Her voice faded, as she slumped to the ground in a faint.

—

AT LEAST this wasn't a terrifying darkness. She could hear Chip's voice, and he was speaking to her—way off in the distance.

"Please, Sally! Darling—" he kept repeating.

"I'm all right, Chip." But he didn't

(Continued on page 102)

Look
FOR SMART MEN

Positive Penetrating Action
GROW NEW HAIR!
KEEP THE HAIR YOU HAVE and
Don't let Baldness come to you!
REMOVES DANDRUFF FLAKES • RELIEVES ITCHING SCALP • KEEPS HAIR WELL GROOMED, CLEAN AND IN PLACE ALL DAY
NO ALCOHOL • NO SOAP • NO GREASE

12 YEARS DEVELOPING AND TESTING
READ THESE SWORN STATEMENTS:
W. L. Hull, Broker, (age 44) says: After using LOOK products 2 weeks my acute dandruff and eczema scalp condition was corrected and new hair began to appear within 30 days.
G. H. L., Los Angeles says: Loose dandruff gone, scalp doesn't itch anymore, new hair started to grow after using my first set of LOOK products.
R. L. Hyet, San Francisco, (age 47) says: I am still using my "LOOK Products" and definitely have new hair growing.
LOOK Smart — FEEL Smart — BE Smart
. . . Start Using LOOK Now!
WRITTEN GUARANTEE OF COMPLETE SATISFACTION OR YOUR MONEY REFUNDED IN FULL
Price: $6.00 per set plus $1.20 Excise Tax
Total: $7.20 (30 Day Treatment) Prepaid

LOOK HAIR PRODUCTS INC.
Box 9892 Los Feliz Sta., Hollywood 27, Calif.
ENCLOSED IS $ ____ FOR ____ SETS ____
NAME ____
STREET ____
CITY ____ ZONE ____
STATE ____
☐ CASH ☑ MONEY ORDER ☐ CHECK

DETECTIVES
Home Study in Detective Training—Professionally Modernized—Recognized Instructors—Easy Payments—Write:
INTERNATIONAL DETECTIVE TRAINING SCHOOL
1701-T Monroe St., N. E. Washington 18, D. C.

BE A Nurse
MAKE $30-$40 A WEEK
You can learn practical nursing at home in spare time. Course endorsed by physicians. Thousands of graduates. 48th yr. One graduate has charge of 10-bed hospital. Another saved $400 while learning. Equipment included. Men, women 18 to 60. High school not required. Easy tuition payments. Trial plan. Write today.
CHICAGO SCHOOL OF NURSING
Dept. 4210, 100 East Ohio Street, Chicago 11, Ill.
Please send free booklet and 16 sample lesson pages.
Name.....
City.....State.....Age.....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE FRIENDLY SET invites you to receive interesting letters—and find new friends who are sincere and worthwhile.

To introduce yourself write to me—addressing your letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Elder, care of THRILLING LOVE, 10 East 40th Street, New YORK 16, N. Y. Write your letter in such a way that others will be eager to know more about you. Be sure to sign your full name and address for our files.

Give me a nickname under which you want your letter to be published. It will be only under this name that other readers will know you. They will write to you in my care—and I will forward their letters.

No letter will be forwarded unless a stamped envelope is enclosed. *Women and girls may write only to women and girls, and men only to men.* After the first letters, direct correspondence between you and your new friends will have been established.

IMPORTANT: In writing to me, or in requesting me to forward your letters, do not neglect to give the following particulars: Your name, address, age, sex. Supply at least one reference.

In asking that letters be forwarded clearly print the number assigned to your chosen friend on the stamped envelope which you enclose. All letters should be written neatly in ink. Do not seal the letter that you wish forwarded. If any unwelcome letters should be received by readers, I would appreciate your forwarding them to this department.

Elizabeth Elder

COLLECTS STONES

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a young boy of 16 who likes to make new friends. I like all sports, especially boxing and swimming, and my hobbies are collecting stones and stamps.

JOHN N. 7155

SCOTCH GIRL

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a Scotch girl of 16 and I would very much like to correspond with girls in other countries. My hobbies are: dancing, ice skating, and collecting movie stars' photos.

AGNES No. 7156

KEEPS AN ALBUM

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a girl of 16. My hobby is writing letters to different people. Also I keep a picture album of the people I write to. I love dancing and outdoor sports.

ROSE No. 7157

LIKES MEETING PEOPLE

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a girl of 17 and I am the kind of girl that likes to meet people and make friends. I enjoy writing and receiving letters. My hobbies are skating, riding bikes, collecting pins and rings and seeing movies or dancing.

JO No. 7158

CALLING ALL GIRLS

Dear Mrs. Elder: My main hobby is writing letters. For pastimes I like to skate, bowl and dance. I wish to hear from girls everywhere.

RUTH No. 7159

ORDINARY GAL

Dear Mrs. Elder: Writing letters is my favorite pastime and am hoping for loads of them. Am just an ordinary gal who enjoys any good clean fun. Am fond of the movies, dancing, and all sports especially hockey. I love music and used to play with a small dance band.

MELODY No. 7160

CARNIVAL SKATER

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a girl who loves roller skating. I have been in three carnivals. I also like dancing.

GWEN No. 7161

MOTHER OF THREE

Dear Mrs. Elder: I would like to receive letters from some pen-pals. I am a married woman of 25 and the mother of three children. I love reading, writing and drawing and I also like to go to the movies.

HELEN No. 7162

SECRETARY-TO-BE

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a British girl 16 years old. I like to swim, dance and go to the pictures. I am studying to be a secretary.

NORMA No. 7163

G. I.'s FIANCEE

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a G.I.'s fiancee, nearly 17 years old. I would very much like to have a pen friend from any part of the United States. My hobbies are letter writing, reading and collecting film stars' pictures.

VERA No. 7164

LONELY

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a young married girl 21 years old. I have a little girl who is boarded out so I am very lonely. I love drawing, music, sports and movies.

BETTY No. 7165

BRITISH COLUMBIA WELCOME

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a 17 year old working girl. I would like to hear from anyone who resides in Vancouver. Traveling is my favorite pastime, writing is next.

KITTY No. 7166

INTERESTING BACKGROUND

Dear Mrs. Elder: I would like to hear from persons in the Midwest, or in the Chicago area. I am interested in classical music, mountain scenery and hobbies of all kinds. For a fellow of 33, I've had a varied and interesting background.

RAY No. 7167

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ORGANIST

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a single man 26 years of age and an organist by trade. I love to travel. I spent 3 years in the Navy and since my discharge I have been studying music and art.

CHUCK No. 7168

SOUTH CAROLINIAN

Dear Mrs. Elder: My age is 17. I love all sports. I enjoy the movies very much, and am interested in music.

BETTY No. 7169

LOVES HORSES

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a girl of 17, whose interests are horses, drawing, music and movies. Would especially love to hear from teens that love horses too or that live on ranches.

EMMY No. 7170

ANYTHING NEW

Dear Mrs. Elder: I'm a married girl of 21. I like all sports and anything new and different.

JANET No. 7171

USES COLORED STATIONERY

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a girl of 15 who likes to write letters on colored stationery and to use colored ink. I also collect movie star pictures and snapshots of people to whom I write.

WANITA No. 7172

WELSH GIRL

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a Welsh girl of 16. I should like very much to have pen friends from any country. I am very fond of swimming and horse riding.

KATIE No. 7173

LIKES TO READ

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a high school girl aged 15. My favorite pastimes are outdoor sports, drawing and reading. I read almost anything. I enjoy dancing and going to the movies. I live in Ireland and would like to correspond with an American girl.

DEB No. 7174

COLLECTS PICTURES

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a young girl who loves all sports, singing and dancing and last but not least I love to collect famous movie stars' pictures.

BOBBY JEAN No. 7175

LIKES ROLLER SKATING

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am 16 years of age. I'm very fond of roller skating and horseback riding.

LU LU No. 7176

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dear Mrs. Elder: I'm a young girl of 20. My hobbies are roller skating and dancing but I also like photography.

NADINE No. 7177

EXCHANGES PHOTOS

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a young girl of 21. I would like to have pen pals from all over the world. My favorite hobbies are writing letters, dancing, movies and exchanging photos.

DARLENE No. 7178

READS THRILLERS

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a British girl of 18. I like to go dancing, skating and to the films. I listen to the radio and love to read thrillers. I love writing and receiving letters.

NORMA No. 7179

EX-SERVICEMAN

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a 30 year old ex-serviceman. I enjoy all music, card games, swimming, tennis and dancing.

EDDIE No. 7180

LONESOME

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a lonesome girl of 18. I am a senior in high school. I love all sports and animals. I will answer all letters and will exchange pictures.

BEE No. 7181

[*Turn page*]

To People who want to write *but can't get started*

Do you have that constant urge to write but the fear that a beginner hasn't a chance. Then listen to what the former editor of Liberty said on this subject:

"There is more room for newcomers in the writing field today than ever before. Some of the greatest of writing men and women have passed from the scene in recent years. Who will take their places? Who will be the new Robert W. Chambers, Edgar Wallace, Rudyard Kipling? Fame, riches and the happiness of achievement await the new men and women of power."

SELLS FIRST STORY AT 60

"Since I am crowding threescore, my objective in taking the N.I.A. course was not to become a professional writer. However, while still taking the course. I sent an article to St. Joseph Magazine. It was immediately accepted. Encouraged, I wrote others. Our Navy accepted them and asked for more. All thanks to N.I.A."—Albert N. Hinman, 1937 East Silver Street, Tucson, Arizona.

Writing Aptitude Test — FREE!

THE Newspaper Institute of America offers a free Writing Aptitude Test. Its object is to discover new recruits for the army of men and women who add to their income by fiction and article writing. The Writing Aptitude Test is a simple but expert analysis of your latent ability, your powers of imagination, logic, etc. Not all applicants pass this test. Those who do are qualified to take the famous N. I. A. course based on the *practical* training given by big metropolitan dailies.

This is the New York Copy Desk Method which teaches you to write by writing. You develop your *individual* style instead of trying to copy that of others. You "cover" actual assignments such as metropolitan reporters get. Although you work at home, on your own time, you are constantly guided by experienced writers. It is really fascinating work. Each week you see new progress. In a matter of months you can acquire the coveted "professional" touch. Then you're ready for market with greatly improved chances of making sales.

Mail the Coupon Now

But the first step is to take the Writing Aptitude Test. It requires but a few minutes and costs nothing. So mail the coupon now. Make the first move towards the most enjoyable and profitable occupation—writing for publication! Newspaper Institute of America, One Park Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. (Founded 1925)

VETERANS

THIS COURSE APPROVED FOR VETERANS' TRAINING

Free

Newspaper Institute of America
One Park Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

Send me, without cost or obligation, your Writing Aptitude Test and further information about writing for profit.

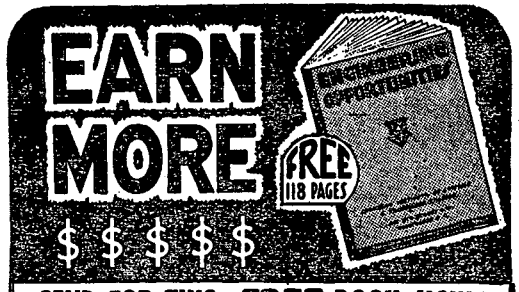
Mr.
Mrs.
Miss .....

Address .....

( ) Check here if you are eligible under the G.I. Bill of Rights. (All correspondence confidential. No salesman will call on you.) 94-T-667

Copyright 1947, Newspaper Institute of America.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



SEND FOR THIS *FREE* BOOK NOW!

● Increase your earning power. Become *thoroughly* trained in a well-paid profession. Without obligation, find out about the opportunities in Electrical, Mechanical, Plastics, Civil, Mining and other engineering fields. Our *free* 118-page handbook, lists details of home study courses, compiled by world authorities. See for yourself how you can soon earn more dollars. Write today, to: Canadian Institute of Science and Technology, Ltd., 424 Century Building, 412, 5th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Approved by the Veterans Administration under the GI Bill of Rights

MAIL THIS COUPON NOW

Canadian Institute of Science & Technology, Ltd.,
424 Century Building, 412, 5th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C.

Please forward free of cost or obligation of any kind your 118-page handbook "Engineering Opportunities".

Name..... **Age**.....

Address .....

CANADIAN ENQUIRIES: 219 Bay Street, Toronto 1.

WATCH & CLOCK REPAIRING
LEARN AT HOME IN YOUR SPARE TIME! . . . Prepare for a happy future, with security—and qualify for a good job NOW. A fascinating and thorough self-instruction training in American and Swiss watches and clocks. Special section on alarm clock repairs. Fast-growing field. Satisfaction is guaranteed. Success-Catalog Free. NELSON CO., 1139 S. Wabash, Dept. 06, Chicago 5, Ill.

PICTURE RING $1.

Exquisite Picture Ring—made from any photo. **SEND NO MONEY!** Mail photo with paper strip for ring size. Pay postman only $1 plus postage. Hand tinted 25c extra. Photo returned with ring. Money back guarantee. SEND PHOTO AND RING SIZE NOW!
PICTURE RING CO. Dept. S-26, CINCINNATI 2, Ohio

Made from Any Photo or Picture! SEND NO MONEY!

If Ruptured Try This Out

Modern Protection Provides Great Comfort and Holding Security

Without Torturous Truss Wearing

An "eye-opening" revelation in sensible and comfortable reducible rupture protection may be yours for the asking, without cost or obligation. Simply send name and address to William S. Rice, Inc., Dept. I-L, Adams, N. Y., and full details of the new and different Rice Method will be sent you Free. Without hard flesh-gouging pads or tormenting pressure, here's a Support that has brought joy and comfort to thousands—by releasing them from Trusses with springs and straps that bind and cut. Designed to securely hold a rupture up and in where it belongs and yet give freedom of body and genuine comfort. For full information—write today!

ASPIRING JOURNALIST

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am an ex-sailor, age 25, struggling through college, with the hope of becoming a journalist. My interests include both sports and the arts. I promise to be an interesting correspondent.

VAN No. 7182

YODELS

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a 16 year old girl. My only hobbies are singing, playing the guitar, and yodeling. I also love dancing very much.

LUCY No. 7183

CALLING AMERICAN BOYS

Dear Mrs. Elder: I should like to correspond with American boys. I am a German boy of 16. I should like to know a lot of things about America and could tell much about Germany.

REINHOLD No. 7184

COLLECTS CHINA

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am 34 years old, have been married. I am a dental technician by trade, which I like very much. I also like to sew, read books and go to the movies. My hobbies are collecting china and old-fashioned jewelry. Would like to hear from girls from the good old West, which I hope some day to be able to see.

LEE No. 7185

HORSE-RACING FAN

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am an English girl, 20 years of age, and employed in a Government Office. I would very much like to correspond with girls from different countries. I like any kind of sports, but particularly horse racing. I am also very fond of music.

PENNY No. 7186

COLLECTS HORSE PICTURES

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am 15 years old and my favorite hobby is horseback riding and collecting horse pictures. I also love to swim, roller skate, ice skate and write to pen pals.

LORRAINE No. 7187

LIKES ICE SKATING

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a married girl of 21. I like ing and other sports very much. I also like music and dancing. I'd like to have many pen pals.

ROSE No. 7188

BOWLING AND DANCING

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a boy of 16. I would enjoy hearing from anyone who is willing to write to me. I like all outdoor sports. My hobbies are bowling and dancing.

HENRY No. 7189

YOUNG MOTHERS, PLEASE WRITE

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a 19 year old married woman. I have a baby. I live in a small town and know very few people here. Won't some other young mothers please write?

MRS. R.S. No. 7190

LIKES ALL SPORTS

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a girl of 15. I like all kinds of sports, especially basketball and I belong to a girls' athletic club. I also like dancing.

JEANIE No. 7191

DANCING FAN

Dear Mrs. Elder: Next to dancing, there's nothing I like to do better than writing and receiving letters. I am a young girl of 17.

DOT No. 7192

LIKES ANYTHING INTERESTING

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a married girl of 21. I like to do everything that comes my way and sounds interesting. I would like to hear from married girls.

DARLENE No. 7193

FARM GIRL

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a farm girl of 17. I love to dance and sing. My hobby is collecting pictures of movie stars.

JAN No. 7194

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHICH OF THESE *Opportunities* INTERESTS *You* MOST?

● *Today*, choose the job you want—and prepare for it. Or if you are already engaged in the work you like best, start training *now* for quicker promotion. Acquire the knowledge that will help you to get ahead faster, make more money and have greater security.

American School, founded in 1897 as an educational institution *not for profit*, can help you to reach your goal just as it has helped others during the past fifty years. Check the coupon at right, add your name and address and mail it at once. The school will send you details on its training plan and outline of study prepared by specialists. There is no charge, no obligation, so send the coupon immediately.

AMERICAN SCHOOL

Dept. G858, Drexel at 58th Street, Chicago 37

CHECK, CLIP AND MAIL COUPON NOW

AMERICAN SCHOOL, Dept. G858, Drexel at 58th, Chicago 37, Ill.

Without obligation, Please send FREE and postpaid, bulletin and details of the Subject checked.

- ☐ PLASTICS ENG'R
- ☐ Refrigeration
- ☐ Architecture and Building
- ☐ Contracting
- ☐ Practical Plumbing
- ☐ Automotive Engr.
- ☐ Aviation Drafting
- ☐ Aviation
- ☐ Business Mngment.
- ☐ Railway Training
- ☐ Accounting
- ☐ Electrical Engr.
- ☐ Electricity—Pract.
- ☐ Electronics, Industrial
- ☐ Bookkeeping
- ☐ Private Secretary
- ☐ Diesel Engineering
- ☐ Sheet Metal Pattern Drafting
- ☐ Drafting and Design for Men and Women
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ High School
- ☐ Air Conditioning
- ☐ Mechanical Eng.
- ☐ Shop Management
- ☐ Tool Making
- ☐ Better Foremanship
- ☐ Machine Shop Operations

NAME..... OCCUPATION.....

ADDRESS..... AGE.....

CITY..... STATE.....

RODE THE RANGE

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a young man, age 33. I have been a cowboy and have ridden the wild range in the western states. I have many interesting events to write about.

H. B. No. 7195

LIKES TENNIS

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a girl of 16, who likes almost any sport there is. My favorite though is tennis. I have just recently moved to the West Coast.

JO No. 7196

DABS WITH PAINT

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a young miss of 18. I am working as a stenographer with a large firm. I would love for girls of my own age to write me all about themselves. I am an ardent Crosby fan. Just off the record I like to dab with paints.

MARGIE No. 7197

LONESOME LASSIE

Dear Mrs. Elder: Here's a letter from a lonesome lassie down Florida way. I am a girl of 15 that really loves horses. My hobbies are collecting stamps, postcards and photographs.

WANDA No. 7198

GOOD MUSIC

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am an ex-soldier of 30 who enjoys all outdoor sports and likes good music. I also like to write and receive letters.

DICK No. 7199

ENJOYS HOME LIFE

Dear Mrs. Elder: I'm a girl of 27. I enjoy home life, music, singing and the movies.

MAE No. 7200

YOUNG MARRIED GIRL

Dear Mrs. Elder: I am a young married woman of 18 and I have one child. I just love writing and receiving letters from young married girls about my own age.

CHRISTINE No. 7201

(More Letters Next Month)

"YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!"

Help Bring Crooks to Justice Through Scientific

CRIME DETECTION!

We have taught thousands this exciting, profitable, pleasant profession. Let us teach you **in your own home.** Learn Finger Printing, Firearms Indentification, Police Photography, Secret Service Methods thoroughly, quickly, at small cost. Over 800 of all American Bureau of Identification employ I. A. S. students or graduates. We can prepare you for this fascinating work, during spare time. Write today, stating age, for "Blue Book of Crime."

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCE, 1920 Sunnyside Ave., Dept. 7368, Chicago 40, Ill.

OLD LEG TROUBLE

Easy to use Viscose Home Method. Heals many old leg sores caused by leg congestion, varicose veins, swollen legs and injuries or no cost for trial if it fails to show results in 10 days. Describe your trouble and get a FREE BOOK.

T. G. VISCOSE COMPANY
140 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago 2, Illinois

Free for Asthma

If you suffer with attacks of Asthma and choke and gasp for breath, if restful sleep is difficult because of the struggle to breathe, don't fail to send at once to the Frontier Asthma Company for a FREE trial of the FRONTIER ASTHMA MEDICINE, a preparation for temporary symptomatic relief of paroxysms of Bronchial Asthma. No matter where you live or whether you have faith in any medicine under the sun, send today for this free trial. It will cost you nothing. Caution! Use only as directed. Address

FRONTIER ASTHMA CO.
668-A FRONTIER BLDG.
462 NIAGARA STREET BUFFALO 1, N. Y.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW MIDGET ELECTRIC
ARC WELDER
RETAILS ONLY $3.95
FULLY GUARANTEED

Plugs into Light Socket—AC or DC

It's new! It's handy! It's efficient! Use the Midget Electric Arc Welder for hundreds of light-metal jobs. Does comparable welding work with a 1/16 inch welding rod on thin metal as that of larger and higher priced welders. Operates on 15 ampere fuse, 110 volt 60 cycle A.C. or D.C. current, by use of our special standard-coated 1/16-inch welding rods. Generous supply of rods supplied with machine. Recommended for all light welding like automobile fenders, etc. Take the Midget Arc anywhere to the job. Sturdily built and fully guaranteed. Comes complete—ready to use. Nothnig else to buy. No previous welding experience needed to strike an arc. In a short time, anyone mechanically inclined can learn to weld with this machine. You'll find hundreds of money-saving, time-saving uses for the Midget Arc around your home, garage, or workshop. Also in garages, factories, repair shops, tin shops, mechanics, farmers, inventors, etc. Order a Midget Electric Arc Welder now! SEND NO MONEY. We'll rush one to you, complete with rods and helmet (equipped with APPROVED welding glass). Pay postman only $3.95 plus postage charges. If not satisfied, return Midget Arc in 5 days from receipt and we'll refund your money immediately. RUSH YOUR ORDER NOW.
MIDGET ARC WELDER CO., Strader Ave., Dept. D-233, Cincinnati 26, Ohio

HORSE MASTERY!
A FINE HOBBY — A GREAT VOCATION!
"The EXPERT HORSEMAN"
SUBSCRIBE TODAY 50¢ One Year

FREE BOOK — Tells how You can learn to: BREAK COLTS, GAIT SHOW HORSES, TRAIN RODEO, STOCK and RACE HORSES, BREAK BAD HABITS, HANDLE ANY HORSE. TRAIN CIRCUS TRICK HORSES. WRITE TODAY!
ANIMAL LOVERS ASSOCIATION
BOX TH-157 TARZANA, CALIFORNIA

ASTHMA

Don't let coughing, sneezing, choking, recurring attacks of Bronchial Asthma ruin sleep and energy another day without trying Mendaco. This great internal medicine is tasteless and taken exactly as directed works thru the blood, thus reaching the bronchial tubes and lungs. Usually starts helping nature immediately to remove thick, sticky mucus, thus alleviating coughing and promoting freer breathing and more refreshing sleep. Get Mendaco from your druggist today. Money back guaranteed unless completely satisfied.

What To Do For Pains of
ARTHRITIS
Try This Free

If you have never used "Rosse Tabs" for pains or arthritis, neuritis, rheumatism, we want you to try them at our risk. We will send you a full-size package from which you are to use 24 Tabs FREE. If not astonished at the palliative relief which you enjoy from your sufferings, return the package and you owe us nothing. We mean it! SEND NO MONEY. Just send name and address and we will rush your Tabs by return mail. ROSSE PRODUCTS CO., Dept. 132, 2708 Farwell Ave., Chicago 45, Illinois.

THE GIRL FOR CHIP

(Continued from page 97)

seem to hear, for his voice still kept begging her to open her eyes.

They were open. Was he blind? She could see his eyes as plain as anything. And why was his voice so frightened?

Gradually, his voice became clearer, and her body seemed to be rising right up off the ground.

"Just a crazy little tenderfoot," he was saying, in a trembling voice, "and I had to fall in love with it. Come on, Sally—snap out of it, baby. I've got you now."

This time Sally really opened her eyes, and it was no dream. Chip *was* holding her, close to his heart. His electric lantern lay on the ground beside them, and she could see relief take the place of anguish in Chip's eyes.

Safe at last, she sobbed against his chest. "I thought you'd never come. This whole place is alive, and it kept closing in on me."

"Shhh, honey," he murmured gently, "don't get hysterical. Here, think you can hang on to this?" He thrust the lantern into her hand. "I'll carry you back. Just hang on tight."

The return trip was hazy. Chip picked his way carefully, occasionally emitting a low, strange whistle.

"That's a signal," he told her, "that you've been located. I found your vanity, and knew you'd wandered off. When I couldn't find you right away, I rushed back to get Matt Billings. We've both been searching for the past hour."

"It's been days, Chip."

"Your poor kid," he muttered. His arms tightened about her, and he kissed her warm throat. "Why did you do such a silly thing, Sally? I've been out of my mind."

That was all Sally wanted to hear. She snuggled her head into his neck, and it wasn't until her ankle had been taped up at the mill, and Chip had her tucked safely in the car beside him that she said:

"Chip, I—I wasn't really lost. Not at first." She cast a worried look in his direction, but all she saw was his profile. "Why," she went on, puffing out her voice like a chest, "I learned to blaze a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trail in the pine woods back home with my baby teeth. It wasn't until that red-headed vulture flew past my head, gnashing its bill—"

"Vulture!" Suddenly Chip started to laugh. "That, my babe in the woods, was a wild turkey. And they don't gnash their bills."

"And I suppose," she snapped, hurt by his amusement, "the rattler in my path was an earthworm."

He sobered immediately. "You're right, Sally. It's no joking matter. It's just good to feel like laughing once more. But please, never go hunting wild posies by yourself again."

Mollified, Sally leaned closer, and leaned her head on his shoulder.

"Chip."

"Huh?"

"I guess I wasn't entirely fainted when you found me, because I heard what you said." She sighed deeply, quoting him. "Just a little tenderfoot—"

"I talk too much."

"But you do love me?"

"I—yes, I love you," he admitted. "I should have known the minute I laid eyes on your inquisitive little face that you'd hook me sooner or later."

"I'm the girl for you? You're sure?"

"There'll never be another."

IT WAS wonderful to hear, but Sally's heart was not entirely at ease. She was worried over having tricked Chip into her arms, so to speak.

She said, a little timidly, "If you do love me, then—then you won't be angry when I tell you that I started out pretending to be lost just to frighten you. I had to know if you cared for me at all."

He turned briefly to glare at her. "Why, you—"

"Oh, Chip, I've been punished enough."

"Of all the fool stunts!"

"Darling, please. Don't stop loving me now, because—" Her voice was like the soft wind blowing through her hair. "If you go back in your shell I'll die. I—I love you so terribly, Chip."

"Well, there's only one thing to do about that," he announced, sliding the

[Turn page]

in the Sensational 1948

MIDWEST RADIOS

Separate Chassis Like the Powerful Series 16 AM-FM Above, or Beautiful Radio-Phono Consoles Available

The SYMPHONY GRAND
RADIO-PHONOGRAPH
AM-FM CONSOLE

A truly magnificent instrument that offers new, improved No-Drift FM, 5 Wave Bands, Automatic Intermix Record Changer that handles both 10" and 12" records, 14½" Panasonic Speaker, and exclusive Midwest Tri-Magnadyne Coil System and Color-Ray Tone Selection. Luxurious Cabinets. Other Console and Table Models with Series 16, 12, and 8 Chassis.

EASY TERMS

30 DAYS TRIAL

SEND FOR FREE Catalog — BUY DIRECT FROM FACTORY AND SAVE

FILL IN COUPON AND MAIL TODAY OR JUST SEND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ON A POSTCARD

MIDWEST RADIO CORPORATION
Dept. 18-K, 909 Broadway, Cincinnati 2, Ohio
Please send me your new FREE 1948 Catalog.

NAME .....

STREET .....

CITY ..... ZONE .... STATE .....

LAW

STUDY AT HOME for PERSONAL SUCCESS and LARGER EARNINGS. 39 years expert instruction—over 108,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All texts furnished. Easy payments. G.I. Approved. Send for FREE BOOK.
AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
Dept. 82-T, 646 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

STOMACH ULCERS

Why suffer needlessly? You can get fast relief, know the joys of good health again quickly . . . with inexpensive, pleasant tasting Medicine Rock Mineral Water. This is nature's own remedy, discovered in the mountains of Southern Oregon.

What it has done for others it can do for you! $3.00 bottle. (Money back guarantee . . . Folder on request.) Medicine Rock Mineral Water Company, Dept. N, Shady Cove, Ore.

Get relief with
MEDICINE ROCK MINERAL WATER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AUTO BOOKS ON APPROVAL

SEND NO MONEY. Just mail the coupon for a complete set of 4 Big, Thick Auto Books. 20th Edition. 2800 Pages! Whether you are a mechanic or helper, expert or apprentice, auto owner or driver, take immediate advantage of this FREE EXAMINATION OFFER.

MAKE GOOD MONEY NOW
HOLD A PERMANENT JOB

America wants its automobiles kept in good repair. Men with "know how" are in demand, at big pay. These books will help you get and hold an important job, or give you a chance to go into business for yourself now or later. Any man who half tries to improve himself can learn auto servicing and repairing by this quick reference method. Use the JIFFY INDEX to find easily understood answer to any auto problem. These wonder books prepared by eleven of America's great automobile engineers. Many hundreds of valuable illustrations. Send the coupon TODAY.

CAN YOU FIX IT?

These wonder books tell step by step HOW to make difficult repairs and adjustments, how to keep a car at maximum efficiency, including latest improvements in car design and operation. Engine troubles and how to correct them well covered.

4 BIG, THICK VOLUMES

2800 pages, 2000 illustrations, wiring diagrams, etc., including Diesel engines. Beautiful modernistic, washable cloth binding.

A year's consulting privileges with our engineers now given with these books without extra charge.

Vocational Publishers Since 1898

AMERICAN TECHNICAL SOCIETY, Dept. A-849
Drexel Ave. at 58th St., Chicago 37, Ill.
I would like to examine your 4-Volume Set of Auto Books. I will pay the delivery charges only, but if I choose I may return them express collect. If after 10 days' use I prefer to keep them, I will send you $2 and pay the balance at the rate of only $3 a month until $24.80 has been paid. Include consulting service as offered above.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State .....

Please attach letter stating age, occupation, employer's name and address, and name and address of at least one business man as reference. Men in service, also please give home address.

NOW! make your FALSE TEETH Fit Tight With PLASTI-LINER

If your plates are loose and slip or hurt; **reline them better than new,** with this pliable, non-porous strip. Just lay on plate, bite and it molds perfectly, hardens for lasting fit and comfort. Ends forever the mess, bother and expense of temporary applications that last only a few hours or few months. Will not injure plates, and **guaranteed to give satisfaction or your money back.** Write for Plasti-Liner today. Pay postman $1.25 for one reliner, $2.25 for both upper and lower--or send money, save C.O.D. charges.

PLASTI-LINER CO., Dept. 47-A Buffalo 2, N.Y.

GOOD MONEY FOR YOUR SPARE TIME!

Be our Dealer in your locality for STRONG UNION MADE WORK AND SPORT GARMENTS. No experience necessary. Easy work. Millions of workers buy work uniforms. We supply everything needed. Write immediately for FREE Outfit.

ROBT. STRONG GARMENT CO., 319-337 W. Van Buren St., Dept. K-10, Chicago, Ill.

AMAZING KUSHIONTRED SHOES! Soft as a Glove

CUSHIONS THE ENTIRE FOOT

EARN BIG COMMISSIONS AND CASH BONUS EVERY MONTH

Make money showing fast-selling men's, women's, children's shoes. Magic KUSHIONTRED clinches easy sales; sensational HITE-BUILDER shoes make men taller; scores of other popular styles. Advance commissions to $3.00 per pair, plus bonus. Experience unnecessary. Samples furnished without cost. Write TODAY for full information.

TANNERS SHOE CO., 129 BOSTON 10, MASS.

WRITE FOR FREE OUTFIT

car to a stop. A moment later he had her in his arms, and the thrill of his kiss swept through her like a tidal wave.

Finally the kisses ceased, and he said gravely: "Now that we've settled this love business—for I do love you, my sweetheart—it is my painful duty to inform you that you're fired."

"Fired!"

"You know the rules about employees going into the 'Glades without a guide. Immediate dismissal."

"Oh, you!" She tried to struggle free, but he held her firmly, laughing at her fury. "You make love to me, then you—" Her voice became smugly triumphant. "Why, you can't fire me. Mr. Cronin is my boss."

"And I," he retorted, equally smug, "am Mr. Cronin's boss. I own the Tamokolee Cypress Mill."

"No!"

His stepfather had owned it before him, Chip explained. Often as a boy he had come to the 'Glades with his father on inspection trips.

"He was really a banker and knew nothing about the lumber business," Chip said. "But he used to try and pretend he did. All the workers treated him with such exaggerated respect that I knew they had spotted his bluff."

His stepfather had been killed while Chip was overseas, leaving the mill to Chip.

"So," he finished, "I determined not to make the same mistake he did. I started in at the bottom, so as to learn the business and the workmen's problems. I wanted them to like me as a guy first. Nobody but Cronin knows I own it."

Flabbergasted, Sally lay inert in his

Read Our Companion Magazines of Romance

POPULAR LOVE

and

EXCITING LOVE

Now on Sale—Each 15c—At All Stands!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

arms, trying to figure out how this new development was going to affect her.

At last she said, "If you own the mill, and I'm fired— Why, there's no place else for me to work down here. And my aunt and uncle would never consent to my living alone in Miami. Oh, Chip," she cried miserably, "I just can't go back to Belleau Falls."

"You just try going back!" he warned, taking her chin and tilting back her head. "I'll speak to Cronin tomorrow about a promotion, honey. And it's been proved," he laughed, "that two can live on twice as much as one. Are you in the mood to accept a new job—vice-president in charge of my crazy heart?"

Sally could have answered that in words tinged with the golden splendor of a dozen sunsets. But her arms, wrapped possessively about his neck, her lips responding warmly to his ardent kisses, were assent as timeless as the universe itself.

All she could manage was, "Mmmmmm—!"

MORE PAGES! MORE PICTURES!

America's Favorite Picture Magazine
Now Bigger and Better Than Ever!

●

NOW ON SALE—15c AT ALL STANDS!

WHO Will Pay the Bills?

NOW you can secure a safe, sound LIFE INSURANCE POLICY secured by legal reserves by paying only 25c for first month's protection and after that only $1.00 per month, practically 3c per day. Pays FULL BENEFITS for death due to any illness, natural causes or any accident; DOUBLE BENEFITS for death due to auto accident; TRIPLE BENEFITS for death due to travel accident. All benefits are DOUBLED during first 5 years of policy. In addition, your policy gives you CASH and Loan Values, Paid-Up Insurance and Extended Insurance.

NO DOCTOR'S EXAMINATION
FOR MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN

PLAN No. 1 Pays Up To $4260.
PLAN No. 2 Pays Up To $3525.
PLAN No. 3 Pays Up To $6000.

25¢
Now Pays First Month's Premium for TRIPLE BENEFIT LIFE INSURANCE
Secured by Legal Reserves
Age Limits 10 to 65

RUSH COUPON TODAY—No Agent Will Bother You

CROWN LIFE INSURANCE CO.
203 North Wabash Ave., Dept. T-11, Chicago 1, Ill.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____

RHEUMATISM

ARTHRITIS-NEURITIS-SCIATICA

If you suffer the agonizing pains of these diseases when the usual remedies have failed, learn about a new trustworthy, modern, non-surgical treatment method. This marvelous treatment is completely explained in the Ball Clinic's FREE Book. Write today. No obligation.

BALL CLINIC Dept. 504 Excelsior Springs, Mo.

LEARN AT HOME TO MOUNT BIRDS

Animals, Heads, Fishes, Pets; to TAN. Be a Taxidermist. Profit and FUN.

Hunters, save your valuable TROPHIES. Mount ducks, squirrels, everything. Learn to TAN for leather and furs. Wonderful HOBBY. Have a HOME MUSEUM.—BIG PROFITS mounting for others. INVESTIGATE NOW.

FREE BOOK With 100 fine game pictures. NOW absolutely FREE. Write TODAY.

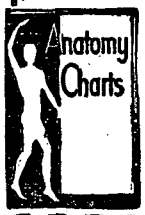
Send Postal TODAY for FREE BOOK. State AGE.
N. W. SCHOOL OF TAXIDERMY, Dept. 4178, Omaha, Neb.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Learn this Profitable Profession

IN 90 DAYS AT HOME

MONEY-MAKING CAREER OPEN to MEN and WOMEN, 18 to 50

Hundreds of men and women between 18 and 50 make $10 to $20 in a single day giving Scientific Swedish Massage and Hydro-Therapy treatments. There is big demand from doctors, hospitals, sanatoriums and clubs. Graduates earn large full time incomes from these or in private practice in their own offices. Others make good money from home treatments given in spare time. Learn this interesting, money-making profession in your own home, through our home study course. Same instructors as in our nationally known resident school. You can win independence and prepare for future security by qualifying for our Diploma. Course can be completed in 3 to 4 months. Many earn while they learn. Begin your training at once.

Anatomy Charts & Booklet FREE

Enroll now and we will include, at no extra cost, many needed supplies. Fit yourself to help meet growing demand for Scientific Swedish Massage. Send the coupon at once for complete details. Anatomy Charts and 32-page illustrated Booklet. FREE, postpaid.

THE COLLEGE OF SWEDISH MASSAGE
Dept. 763P, 100 East Ohio St., Chicago 11, Illinois

Please send me FREE and postpaid, Anatomy Charts, 32-page Booklet and complete details on Home Training.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State.....

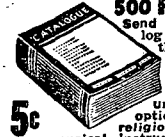
Stop Getting Up Nights

TRY THIS FREE

If you get up many times at night due to Irritation of Bladder or Urinary Tract, and have never used PALMO TABLETS we want you to try them at our risk. We will send you a full-size package from which you are to use 20 tablets FREE. If not delighted at the palliative relief received, return the package and you owe us nothing. We mean it. Send No Money. No C.O.D. to pay. Write today and we will send your PALMO TABLETS by return mail postpaid. Address — H. D. POWERS CO., Dept. 1129-M, Box 135, Battle Creek, Mich.

Big New Novelty Catalog Now Ready!

500 Pages; 6000 Amazing Novelties



5c

Send 5c today for this mammoth, amazing new catalog of over 6,000 novelties. More fascinating than a World's Fair. Thousands of things you never knew existed—never knew where to get. Includes novelties, tricks, jokes, live animals and pets, scientific supplies, den novelties, hobby supplies, planes and boats, looms, magic, unusual seeds, gadget time savers, cameras and optical goods, movies, projectors, lucky jewelry, religious novelties, telegraph sets, magnets, disguises, easy musical instruments, stamps, coins, puzzles, fortune tellers, occult and supernatural, radios, experimental sets, auto & bike accessories, Western belts and wearing apparel, telescopes, magnifiers, compasses, banks, smokers' gadgets, artists' supplies, printing sets, engines and motors, electric shockers, knives, billfolds, fireworks, guns and rifles, weird articles, archers, swimming helps, 1000 fascinating books, games, locks, live chameleons, rings, watches, charms, barometers, slide rules, exercisers, money savers, curious plants, handy tools, Indian novelties, etc., etc., etc. Jammed and packed with sensational funmakers and useful articles. Big catalog—over 1 inch thick, 6 color cover. (DeLuxe Hard Bound Library Edition 15c). Send 5c to help cover postage with your name and address to:

JOHNSON SMITH & CO., Dept. A-78, Detroit 7, Mich.

WHAT YOUR STARS REVEAL

(Continued from page 8)

occupation that is connected with the restaurant or food business.

Love of Farming

WILLIAM N. M. writes: Why is it that both my sister and I have retained our love of farming? Our folks were poor farmers, and constantly tried escaping to the regular hours of an industrial job. They never made the transition successfully, however. My sister married a banker, and is now a very rich woman. I became a store manager. Nevertheless, we have both come to own large tracts of land and enjoy raising crops when time allows. My sister was born May 6, 1897. I was born December 30, 1904.

What your horoscopes reveal: When your sister was born, the Sun was in the Earth Sign Taurus which rules wealth. At your birth the Sun was in the Earth Sign Capricorn which rules business administration. Both Signs are closely allied with products of the soil. That is why each of you has a leaning toward farming. It does not matter that you observed your parents having difficulty at the same thing.

Forgetful Husband

MRS. OLIVE J. H. writes: Why has my husband become so forgetful during the last three or four years? He used to have a wonderful memory, but now he sits for hours looking ahead of him, as if he were seeing strange visions in the distance. He does not remember some things, but he is still a good worker. Will he snap out of this mood? He was born June 29, 1905.

What his horoscope reveals: Inasmuch as your husband was born when the Sun, Mercury, and Neptune were conjoined in the Sign Cancer which rules the softer elements of the temperament, he is inclined to be rather sensitive to impressions. At the present time Neptune is transiting through the Sign Libra, in square aspect with its own position in your husband's horoscope, creating an escape complex.

That is why he appears withdrawn. Forgetfulness is one way to get away from harsh reality. Neptune is moving away from the square aspect. Within a year or two it will be sufficiently far away in zodiacal space to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reduce the current stress deliberately.

Therefore, be kind and sympathetic during the interim so as to give him a chance to build up a resistance against the extreme effect of the adverse vibratory influences.

Is Her Sweetheart True?

KATHRYN E. B. writes: I don't like being suspicious, but I can't help wondering if my sweetheart is really true to me. I was born August 8, 1929. He was born March 31, 1927. What should I believe?

What your horoscopes reveal: You are the romantic type because you were born when the Sun was in the Sign Leo which rules love. This Sign also rules the stage. That is why you are able to dramatize your emotions. Actually you haven't a suspicious nature. But your imagination is so lively that you envision yourself as the heroine of all sorts of exciting love scenes.

You and your sweetheart are well-matched as the result of the harmonious trine aspect between your Sun with his Sun in the Sign Aries. He is ardent and forthright. He is incapable of doing anything mean or vindictive. Therefore, don't accuse him of being surreptitious. You know this to be so.

This play-acting of yours is prompted to some extent by the Saturn-Pluto vibrations in your Sun Sign, in his solar Fifth House which rules the affections, and speculation. You are under such strong influence of your theatrical notions that you are even willing to risk love for the sake of assuaging your desire for an excitement. Don't play around with such whims. Suspicion can be a deadly explosive, and not worth the gamble.

☆

October Trends

October 1st to 4th

WATCH your step as well as your hands and your temper during the first few hours of the month. Inattention to where you are going or to what you are doing can be the cause of a mistake or an accident while Mercury is in square aspect with Mars.

Mercury is the cosmic symbol of thought and speed. Mars is the cosmic symbol of fire and courage. Since the square aspect creates an adverse influence, even aggressive self-defence can be risky if your attitude is too combative.

[*Turn page*]

PAINT YOUR CAR with "WYPE" for $3.95
Amazing NEW AUTO ENAMEL
You WIPE ON Instead of Brushing or Spraying
GET BEAUTIFUL MIRROR-LIKE FINISH THAT LOOKS LIKE SPRAY JOB! ONE QUART DOES ENTIRE JOB!
2-YR Guarantee
NO MASKING NEEDED
LOOKS LIKE SPRAY JOB
At last—you can paint your car with WYPE for $3.95 and get a beautiful, high-gloss finish that rivals an expensive, professional spray job. With WYPE you need NO BRUSH, NO SPRAY, NO MASKING! You just WIPE ON with Powder Puff, furnished. Takes about an hour to apply. No streaks, no lap-marks. WYPE dries dust-free in one hour. Guaranteed for TWO years not to peel, chip, crack or fade, if simple directions are followed.
DRIES TO GLISTENING, PROFESSIONAL FINISH!
WYPE is a new Miracle Enamel for autos. It is NOT a wax or polish but a hard, high-lustre ENAMEL finish. With WYPE, anyone can do a beautiful job! Get a quart to paint your car or to get started in this BIG-MONEY business! See your dealer or order direct.
SEND NO MONEY! Order WYPE Today!
8 POPULAR COLORS:
Black, Red, Maroon, Gray, Brewster (dark) Green, Jewel (light) Green, Washington (dark) Blue, Monticello (light) Blue
All $3.95 per Quart!
Order one quart or more today! Just send postcard. Then pay mailman for WYPE plus postal charges. Or send money with order and WE pay postage.
NEW MONEY-MAKING BUSINESS! WYPE 2 Cars Daily for $25.00 each—Gross UP TO $260 Weekly Profit!
Start making BIG MONEY now! Sell WYPE in cans or go into business painting cars yourself (or hire others). Send for FREE details of powerful money-making plan. Why wait? Start now by ordering one quart or more of WYPE today!
WYPE CORP., Dept. 57-M, 2214 Dolman St., St. Louis, Mo.

SIMPLE EASY INVENTION TRIMS HAIR AT HOME!
SAVES BARBER BILLS
Trims hair as it combs! Easy! Quick! Keeps men's, women's children's hair trim, neat, freshly-cut looking all the time! Trims, tapers, thins out uneven hair. Use like ordinary comb. Safe. Simple.
No experience required. Fine for legs, underarms!
SAMPLES FOR AGENTS
Sell the wild! Sample offer sent immediately to all who send name at once. A penny postal will do. SEND NO MONEY. Just your name. ARISTEE CO., 2478 Bar St., AKRON, OHIO

AIR RIFLES BENJAMIN AIR PISTOLS
PIONEERS - LEADERS
SEND FOR FREE FOLDER OF LATEST MODELS TODAY
If you want a REAL GUN for PRACTICAL USE inside or outdoors get a SAFE - CLEAN - ECONOMICAL - BENJAMIN with Adjustable Power and Amazing Accuracy. For BEST RESULTS use BENJAMIN H-C PELLETS. WRITE AT ONCE.
BENJAMIN AIR RIFLE CO., 876 MARION ST., ST. LOUIS 4, MO.

WHY WEAR DIAMONDS
When dazzling Zircons from the mines of far-away mystic East are so effective and inexpensive! Thrilling beauty, stand acid, true backs! Exquisite mountings. See before you buy. Write for FREE catalogue.
Address: National Jewelry Company Dept. 5-A Wheeling, W. Va.
Catalog FREE!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAW for MONEY!

Be An ARTIST!

PREPARE TODAY FOR THE FUTURE THAT LIES AHEAD

Trained Artists Are Capable of Earning $50, $60, $75 A WEEK

Use your spare time to prepare for a profitable Art Career! Start training at home, now!

It's pleasant and interesting to study Art the W. S. A. way. COMMERCIAL ART, DESIGNING, CARTOONING—all in one complete course. No previous Art experience necessary—we teach you step-by-step by our practical home study method well-known since 1914. Write today for information and FREE BOOK, "ART FOR PLEASURE AND PROFIT"—tells all about our course, material furnished, instruction service and commercial opportunities for you in art. STATE AGE.

Course Approved Under G.I. Bill

WASHINGTON SCHOOL OF ART
Studio 6611H, 1115-15th St., N.W., Wash. 5, D.C.

ACCOUNTANT

BECOME AN EXPERT

Executive Accountants and C. P. A.'s earn $2,000 to $10,000 a year. Thousands of firms need them. We train you thoroly at home in spare time for C. P. A. examinations or executive accounting positions. Previous experience unnecessary. Personal training under supervision of staff of C. P. A.'s. Placement counsel and help. Write for free book, "Accountancy, the Profession That Pays."

LASALLE Extension University, 417 So. Dearborn St.
A Correspondence Institution Dept. 11329-H, Chicago 5, Ill.

STAMMER?

This new 128-page book, "Stammering, Its Cause and Correction," describes the Bogue Unit Method for scientific correction of stammering and stuttering — successful for 46 years. *Free — no obligation.*

GET THIS FREE BOOK!

Benjamin N. Bogue, Dept. 4284, Circle Tower, Indianapolis 4, Ind.

LAW

STUDY AT HOME for PERSONAL SUCCESS and LARGER EARNINGS. 39 years expert instruction—over 108,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All texts furnished. Easy payments. G.I. Approved. Send for FREE BOOK.
AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
Dept. 82-T, 646 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

One-Spot Flea Killer
FOR FLEAS
35¢

Kills Lice, Ants, Fleas, Aphids, Bedbugs, Crab Lice, Potato Bugs, Bean Beetles

DUST ON ONE SPOT *Guaranteed by Manufacturer*
One-Spot Co. Jessup, Md.

FREE BOOK—
On Chronic Ailments

40-page FREE BOOK explains the causes and effects of these ailments. Write today—Thornton & Minor Clinic, Suite 1156, 926 McGee St., Kansas City, Mo.

The aspects are neutral until the Fourth, when the Sun and Neptune are conjoined in the Sign Libra which rules marriage and collaboration. The Sun is the cosmic symbol of authority. Neptune is the cosmic symbol of illusion and intuition. The conjunction, in this instance, is an inharmonious aspect. Evasion, collusion, deceit, subterfuge, secrecy, and slyness can result from this influence. Therefore, beware of trickery, and don't argue with your lifemate about trivial subjects.

Fortunately the day closes with Venus and Saturn in sextile aspect. Venus is the cosmic symbol of love and beauty. Saturn is the cosmic symbol of duty. The sextile aspect is a favorable influence. Therefore, a great deal of harmony can prevail throughout the evening. Stay at home to enjoy the full scope of domestic felicity.

☆

October 5th to 11th

NEUTRAL aspects prevail until the 8th when the Sun and Pluto are in sextile aspect. Pluto is the cosmic symbol of awareness. Since the Sun is in the Sign Libra which rules marriage, and Pluto is in the Sign Leo which rules love, a serene cycle is indicated for sweethearts and for married folks.

The next major aspect occurs on the 10th when Venus is in trine aspect with Uranus. Uranus is the cosmic symbol of inspiration. The trine aspect is the most favorable influence in the cosmic category. Venus is in the Sign Libra. Uranus is in the Sign Gemini which rules the intellect, neighbors, and transportation. This is a fortunate combination for neighborliness, inspired conversation, and an enjoyable trip for pleasure or business.

☆

October 12th to 18th

ON THE 13th Mercury and Pluto are in square aspect. Mercury is in the Sign Scorpio which rules savings. Because this configuration can cause a mental and emotional strain, avoid conflict by not arguing about money.

The Sun-Saturn sextile on the 14th is a wonderful influence for constructive business progress. Anything that you start or conclude now can turn out well.

Mars-Jupiter parallel. This brings out into the open exceedingly strong vibratory forces which can result in a severe test of self-discipline. Inasmuch as Jupiter is the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cosmic symbol of affluence, don't get the notion that you are rich enough to splurge on anything your heart desires. When the time comes to pay the bills, you may find that you miscalculated by a wide margin. Avoid a regrettable deficit by not allowing yourself to be tempted.

This is not a favorable aspect for financial manipulations, without sufficient credit and capital to back you up.

☆

October 19th to 25th

SOME of the most enjoyable experiences of the month are likely to occur on the 20th when the Sun and Uranus are in trine aspect. This configuration is favorable for nimble-witted work, publishing, collaboration, travel, buying, selling, advertising, lecturing, correspondence, and all other pursuits that depend on mental and manual skill.

Also on this day there is another favorable vibratory influence, created by the Mars-Neptune sextile. This aspect is splendid for domestic and marital happiness. Attend to

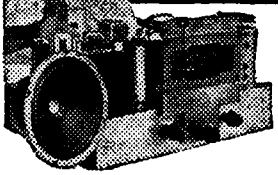
[*Turn page*]

Inspiring True Picture-Stories of Action and Adventure!

Approved by Parents and Teachers!

Now On Sale 10c At All Stands

GET INTO **RADIO TELEVISION ELECTRONICS NOW!**



INTERESTING JOBS — GOOD PAY — EARN WHILE YOU LEARN — A BUSINESS OF YOUR OWN, are just a few of the opportunities awaiting you as a Trained National Radio, Television and Electronic Expert. Broadcasting, Radio Service, and other specialized phases are constantly demanding more and more trained men. Get all the facts about this GREAT FIELD. ACT AT ONCE!

SHOP METHOD HOME TRAINING
By a Real Established Resident Trade School With Classrooms, FM Studios, Shops and Laboratories

gives you the knowledge, skill, and experience that assure definite progress — step-by-step for a brighter, more prosperous future. You Learn by Doing. Build a standard LONG DISTANCE SUPERHETERODYNE RECEIVER as shown above, an audio oscillator, a signal generator (low powered Radio transmitter) and many other units and experiments with equipment furnished you in your home. National Graduates everywhere have qualified, through spare time study for well-paying jobs, success and security in Radio. It is a field with a proved future. Find out what this industry offers National Trained Service Engineers, Operators and Technicians. Take the first step to greater success NOW by sending coupon below—TODAY! G.I. APPROVED

FREE LESSON

NATIONAL SCHOOLS
LOS ANGELES 37, CALIFORNIA

MAIL COUPON

National Schools, Dept. 12-TQ
4000 S. Figueroa Los Angeles 37, Calif.

Mail me sample lesson and book FREE. Paste on a post card

NAME.....AGE.....
ADDRESS.....
CITY.....ZONE.....STATE.....
☐ Check here if Veteran of World War II

STOP Scratching
It May Cause Infection

Relieve itching caused by eczema, athlete's foot, pimples—other itching troubles. Use cooling, medicated **D.D.D. Prescription.** Greaseless, stainless. Calms itching fast. 35c trial bottle proves it—or money back. Ask your druggist for **D. D. D. Prescription.**

High School Course at Home
Many Finish in 2 Years

Go as rapidly as your time and abilities permit. Course equivalent to resident school work—prepares for college entrance exams. Standard H. S. texts supplied. Diploma. Credit for H. S. subjects already completed. Single subjects if desired. High school education is very important for advancement in business and industry and socially. Don't be handicapped all your life. Be a High School graduate. Start your training now. Free Bulletin on request. No obligation.

American School, Dept. H-858, Drexel at 58th, Chicago 37

Now CHEAP OIL BURNER
FOR HEATING AND COOKING STOVES FURNACES
HEAT YOUR HOME, COOK YOUR MEALS WITH CHEAP FURNACE OIL

NO MORE SHOVELING COAL OR ASHES. Sensational Fuelizer Starter Vaporizing System turns Cheap No. 1 Furnace Oil, also Range, Heater, Tractor Distillate, Kerosene and like oils into oil heat—one of the quickest, hottest fires known. LIFETIME GUARANTEE. $1.00 Bonus Offer for Testing. We will let you try it in your own stove or furnace for one month. Get yours for introducing. Big profits QUICK. Be first. Send in your name today for details and cash in on the tremendous demand for this Amazing Invention.

NORTHWEST MFG. CO., 609-N Mitchell, S. Dak.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOME-STUDY BRINGS BIGGER PAY

Don't be caught napping when Opportunity knocks. Prepare for advancement and more money by training *now* for the job ahead. *Free 48-Page Books Tell How.* Write for the book on the business field you like—or mail us this ad with your name and address in the margin. *Now*, please.

☐ Higher Accountancy ☐ Business Management
☐ Traffic Management ☐ Salesmanship
☐ Law—Degree of LL.B. ☐ Expert Bookkeeping
☐ Industrial Management ☐ C. P. A. Coaching
☐ Stenotypy (Machine Shorthand)

LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY
A Correspondence Institution
Dept. 11329-R 417 So. Dearborn St. Chicago 5

DO YOU WANT TO **STOP TOBACCO?**

Banish the craving for tobacco as thousands have with Tobacco Redeemer. Write for free booklet telling of injurious effect of tobacco and of a treatment which has relieved many men. Caution: Use only as directed.

30 Years in Business **FREE BOOK**
THE NEWELL COMPANY
153 Clayton, Sta., St. Louis 5, Mo.

BE A DETECTIVE

WORK HOME or TRAVEL. Experience unnecessary. **DETECTIVE** Particulars FREE. Write to **GEO. R. H. WAGNER**, 125 W. 86th St., N. Y.

COMB-A-TRIM The New Quick Trimmer

Something New! Trim your hair without any experience. It's easy! The excess hair comes off smoothly and easily by just pulling trimmer through hair like an ordinary comb. Save on hair-cut bills. . . . Trim your own hair or the whole family's. Send 59c and your Comb-A-Trim will be sent at once, postpaid. **59¢**

SPECIAL OFFER Send $1.00 for 2 Comb-A-Trims. Save 18c **2 for 1** 5 Extra Blades (Year's Supply) **25¢**

COMB-A-TRIM CO., CAREW TOWER, Dept. L-51, Cincinnati, Ohio

PHOTO-RING

ANY PHOTO OR PICTURE

Of Sweetheart, Relative or Friend, reproduced permanently in this beautiful onyx like ring featuring the New Magnified Setting! Will last a lifetime! Indestructible! Waterproof! Enclose strip of paper for ring size. Pay postman plus a few cents postage. If you send cash we pay postage. (Photos Returned.) **$1.00** (Expertly painted 25c extra.)

PHOTO MOVETTE RING CO., Dept. T-2, CINCINNATI, OHIO

HELP KIDNEYS If Backaches

Do you suffer from Getting Up Nights, Backache, Nervousness, Leg Pains, Dizziness, Swollen Ankles, Rheumatic Pains, Bladder Weakness, Painful Passages, or feel old and rundown, due to non-organic and non-systemic Kidney and Bladder troubles? If so, try **Cystex.**

This great medicine, a doctor's formula, has helped thousands of sufferers for over 20 years. Usually the very first dose of **Cystex** starts to work immediately to help you in these three ways: 1. Helps nature remove irritating excess acids, poisonous wastes and certain germs. 2. This cleansing action helps nature alleviate many pains, aches, soreness and stiffness. 3. Helps reduce frequent night and day calls, thus promoting better sleep.

Get **Cystex** from your druggist today. Give it a fair trial as directed on package. Money back guaranteed unless **Cystex** satisfies you.

things at home, with the help and encouragement of your family.

Avoid quarrels, pessimism, and a sense of frustration by not giving in to the temporary yet adverse vibrations that are created on the 23rd by the Mercury-Saturn square and the Venus-Mars square. Both these configurations can cause doubt and depression if you allow yourself to become the prey of confused thoughts and exaggerated emotions. Steer clear of anyone who is lugubrious, or who tries to depress you with a spurious tale filled with self-pity.

Don't plan any social activities for the 26th when Venus and Pluto are in square aspect. This configuration can create an aura of false gaiety, or prevent some of your guests from attending your party for reasons beyond their control. Also, don't spend an excessive amount of money for clothes, since the apparel may prove unsatisfactory later on.

☆

October 26th to 31st

THE Mercury-Saturn square is an adverse aspect to enter into a dispute with an elderly person. Pay no attention to complaints, nor worry because there is a delay in getting things done promptly.

The Mars-Pluto conjunction on the 28th is an inflammatory influence for abrupt actions and excited emotions. Stay out of a public place of entertainment where there is risk of fire or congestion. Also if you are in charge of children, make sure that they have no chance to get hold of matches or sharp instruments.

Don't lose your sense of alertness for a single instant during the peak of this aspect because it is fraught with an excessive amount of dynamic pressure that can develop into serious friction. Avoid danger through preventive measures.

The Mercury-Venus conjunction on the 29th is an harmonious aspect for social entertainments. Invite your friends to visit you, or visit someone who has an agreeable and sympathetic disposition.

The Venus-Saturn square on the 30th can cause you to feel unpopular. Disregard this impression. At the same time stay in your familiar surroundings since this is the one place of which you can be sure of a genuine welcome during this adverse configuration.

All the other aspects during the remainder of October are of minor significance. Therefore, join your friends and relatives in having a jolly good time on Halloween!

☆ Your Daily Horoscope in Every Issue of EVERYDAY ASTROLOGY—15c Everywhere! ☆

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FAREWELL TO LOVE

(Continued from page 65)

She woke up tingling and thrilled, half laughing and half crying. Suppose it were true? Maybe she knew it subconsciously, and her subconscious was beating at her through her dreams to wake her up and make her acknowledge her love for Peter. If her subconscious were right, wouldn't she be a fine kind of coward to keep on running away and not give Peter a decent chance?

She flew back to New York from Puerto Rico and got to West Harley on the morning train. She stood at the little station and looked up Main Street. Part way up the street trees waved in the village square. Some early customers were entering the stores. In front of the station an old man sat dozing.

Kate stood still. Now that she was here she didn't know quite what to do. You couldn't just barge up to a man and say I'm pretty sure you love me so I've come a couple of thousand miles to find out. Or could you do that? Maybe that was just what she ought to do.

She turned to walk over to the only taxi the place afforded, then stood still, her mouth open a little, her eyes wide with astonishment.

"I knew you'd come back," Peter said. "Believe it or not I've come down to meet this danged train every morning for the last week."

"Why, how did you know I'd come back?" Kate asked.

"Because I love you so much you had to come back. Love is like a magnet. It pulls at you."

[*Turn page*]

BIG! CASH! EASY!

SELLING MIRACLE WONDER-WORKER SHOES

Cushioned from heel to toe, Vul-Cork Soles, Steady Repeats.

MONTHLY CASH BONUS

Big line with special features—all styles for men, women, children. Big Advance Commissions and Bonus. Experience unnecessary. No investment. Samples Supplied. Make Big Cash Easy. Write today for free outfit!

FREE SELLING OUTFIT

PARAGON SHOE CO., 716 Columbus Ave., Dept. P-23, Boston 20, Mass.

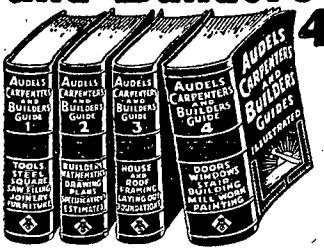
ASTHMA

WRITE FOR 10-DAY TRIAL OFFER!

IF YOU SUFFER FROM BRONCHIAL ASTHMA PAROXYSMS, from coughs, gasping wheezing — write quick for daring **10-DAY TRIAL OFFER.** Inquiries from so-called "hopeless" cases especially invited.

NACOR, 423-J, State Life Bldg., Indianapolis 4, Ind.

AUDELS Carpenters and Builders Guides 4 vols. $6



Inside Trade information for Carpenters, Builders, Joiners, Building Mechanics and all Woodworkers. These Guides give you the short-cut instructions that you want—including new methods, ideas, solutions, plans, systems and money saving suggestions. An easy progressive course for the apprentice and student. A practical daily helper and Quick Reference for the master worker. Carpenters everywhere are using these Guides as a Helping Hand to Easier Work, Better Work and Better Pay. To get this assistance for yourself, simply fill in and mail the FREE COUPON below.

Inside Trade Information On:

How to use the steel square—How to file and set saws—How to build furniture—How to use a mitre box—How to use the chalk line—How to use rules and scales—How to make joints—Carpenters arithmetic—Solving mensuration problems—Estimating strength of timbers—How to set girders and sills—How to frame houses and roofs—How to estimate costs—How to build houses, barns, garages, bungalows, etc.—How to read and draw plans—Drawing up specifications—How to excavate—How to use settings 12, 13 and 17 on the steel square—How to build hoists and scaffolds—skylights—How to build stairs—How to put on interior trim—How to hang doors—How to lath—lay floors—How to paint

THEO. AUDEL & CO., 49 W. 23rd St., New York City

Mail Audels Carpenters and Builders Guides, 4 vols., on 7 days' free trial. If O.K. I will remit $1 in 7 days, and $1 monthly until $6 is paid. Otherwise I will return them. No obligation unless I am satisfied.

Name.....

Address.....

Occupation.....

Reference..... PAL

"GET ON Uncle Sam's PAYROLL"

START $1,756 to $3,021 Year

Prepare NOW For Next Examinations

VETERANS GET SPECIAL PREFERENCE

Railway Postal Clerks
City Mail Carriers
City Postoffice Clerks
Stenographers-Typists
Messengers, Etc.
Storekeeper
Gaugers
32-Page Book on Civil Service FREE
Mail Coupon today—SURE

★

COUPON

FRANKLIN INSTITUTE

Dept. M94

Rochester 4, N. Y.

Rush to me, entirely free of charge, 32 page book with: (1) A full description of U. S. Government jobs; (2) A list of U. S. Government jobs; (3) Tell me how to prepare for a job.

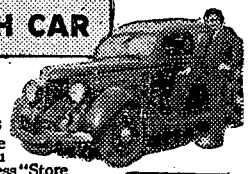
Name.....

Address.....

.....Vet?.....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WANTED
MAN WITH CAR



No Time Like Now to Get In
McNess Business

It's no trick to make good money when you use your car as a McNess "Store on Wheels." Farmers buy everything they can from McNess Men because McNess Products are tops in quality, represent extra values. Attractive business-getting prizes and premiums; also money-saving deals to customers make selling McNess daily necessities a snap.

Use Your CAR to Raise Your PAY

We Supply Capital—Start Now!

There's no better work anywhere. Pays well, permanent, need no experience to start, and we supply capital to help you get started quick. You begin making money first day. Write at once for McNess Dealer Book. It's FREE. Tells all—no obligation. (1)

THE McNESS CO., 522 Adams St., Freeport, Ill.

What Every Mason Wants

We have Important Masonic books for **Blue Lodge, Chapter, Commandery, Scottish Rite, and Shrine.**
OUR RITUALS ARE USED THE WORLD OVER
Send for free catalog of books and rituals for Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Knights of Columbus, etc.
EZRA A. COOK, Publisher, P. O. 796, GN, Chicago 90, Ill.

Learn BAKING At Home

Baking is one of America's high industries in wages. Nearly depression-proof. Thorough basic home course lays sound foundation. If you have aptitude, write for FREE BOOKLET, "Opportunities in Commercial Baking."
National Baking School, 1315 Mich. Ave., Dept. 1808, Chicago 5

BETTER SIGHT FOR PEOPLE WHO MUST WEAR GLASSES

Just out! An amazing scientific discovery called 27 Second Cleaner. Cleans and polishes eye-glasses in 27 seconds. Prevents "greasing," steaming. Smudgy finger marks disappear "as if by magic." Year's supply, in plastic compact only 59c postpaid. Special—2 for $1.00 C.O.D. orders, postage extra. Money back guarantee. Send order to 27 Second Cleaner Co., Dept. 15-M, 6337 N. Talman Ave., Chicago 45, Ill. Dealers, agents, salesmen, write for big profit plan.

RUPTURE!

An amazing Air-Cushion Invention allows body freedom at work or play. Light, neat, cool, sanitary. Durable, cheap. Day and night protection helps Nature support weakened muscles gently but surely. No risk. **Sent on Trial!** Write NOW for free Booklet and **Proof of Results.** All correspondence confidential.
Brooks Company, 183 State St., Marshall, Mich.

1c A Penny May Bring You **HAPPINESS!**

Would you gamble a penny to win Happiness, Companionship, Love, Financial Success, through the help of a mysterious International Secret Organization? Then just send name and address on a post-card TODAY for your FREE Copy of great Book "Mayan Mysteries". It can change your whole life! Address Rose Dawn, The Mayan Order, Dept. 5117, P. O. Box 2710, San Antonio, Tex.

Store Route Plan PAYS BIG MONEY

SELL COUNTER CARD PRODUCTS

Build a good-paying business of your own. Call on dealers of all kinds; show nationally-advertised Aspirin, Cosmetics, Razor Blades and 200 other necessities. Big 5c and 10c retail packages, high quality. Attractive counter displays sell goods fast. Free book gives amazing facts. Write! World's Products Co., Dept. 73-W, Spencer, Ind.

"I should say—it—did," said Kate. Then she said, "What about Elaine?"

"Oh that," Peter grinned. "She was just making a play for me out of sheer vanity. Every man she meets has to fall for Elaine or she thinks she's slipping. But I never thought seriously about her. A girl's got to have something more than beauty to get me."

"Oh, she has?"

"Sure. I'd rather have you in blue jeans than have the most beautiful—" Peter stopped and stared hard. He seemed to see Kate for the first time. "Gosh!" his voice held awe. "Katie, you *are* beautiful!"

Kate turned coy and fluttered her lashes at him. "So they've been telling me all over the Caribbean," she said.

"Gee!" Peter said. "You kind of scare me, Katie, being so beautiful. I like you better in the jeans. I—I hardly dare kiss you now."

Kate took only one step to reach him. Once before him she lifted her lips.

"Try it," she whispered. "I bet it'll be good."

"You darling!" said Peter.

Then he tried it.

And it was good.

"Everybody Benefits— Everybody Gives!"

Contribute to Your Local COMMUNITY CHEST RED FEATHER CAMPAIGN!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The CHARM COLUMN

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Mrs. C. J. E., Larchmont, New York: A slice of raw potato or lemon will help remove discoloration from your hands. Keep a bottle of hand lotion near your kitchen sink and on your bathroom shelf for quick use after drying your hands.

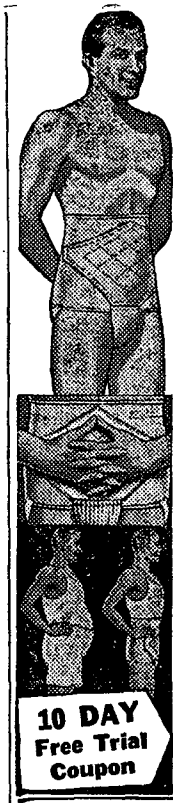
Natalie F., Chartley, Mass.: Don't try to change the shape of the eyebrows. Follow the natural curve of the bows, plucking only the straggly hairs. Choose eyeshadow to match the color of your eyes. Apply it to the upper lids only—and use it sparingly.

B. J., Shelley, Idaho: Try beauty grains—available at any drug store—to keep your skin free from blackheads and minor blemishes. After washing your face thoroughly, shake a small amount of the powdery meal into the palm of your hand and add just enough water to form a smooth paste. Spread the paste over your face and let it dry. With fingertips or washcloth, scrub briskly. Rinse off with warm water and finish off with cold, cold water splashings.

Deborah, Logan, Utah: Never file the corners of your nails. Allow the nails to grow out at the corners clear to the edge of the fingers and shape them from there. After the shaping, use cuticle lotion. Cleanse with soap, water and nailbrush. Dry thoroughly and apply a good polish remover for any residue that might be left from the soap cleansing.

Miss Susy, Poultney, Vt.: Blonde hair that has been coarsened through bleaching will respond to a vinegar rinse. Use two tablespoonfuls of vinegar in the last rinse water to make the hair soft and fluffy. All type hair can do with a good brushing, so get that hairbrush into use daily, putting plenty of energy into the brushing.

See LISTEN GIRLS! on Page 84



Appear SLIMMER
Look YOUNGER
Feel BETTER
Instantly!

Don't let them talk about your "Bay Window"—stay slenderized with this amazing free-action, ever comfortable, elastic woven garment!

"INTERLOCKING HANDS" PRINCIPLE
Clasp hands over abdomen, as in picture—raise and press gently—notice how much better you feel! Sturdy non-stretch fabric is BUILT IN with the stretchy weave of the Commander for EXTRA DOUBLE SUPPORT across the abdomen. Instantly the Commander flattens your "Corporation"—BRACES YOUR BACK—improves your appearance!

TRY IT 10 DAYS AT OUR EXPENSE
COMMANDER has real man's completely detachable athletic type pouch. Takes just a moment to detach for washing or replacing with another. Gives GENUINE male protection. Send coupon—wear the Commander TEN DAYS AT OUR EXPENSE—if you do not get all the results you expect, return it and YOUR MONEY WILL BE REFUNDED.

10 DAY Free Trial Coupon

MAIL COUPON NOW

Ward Green Company, Dept. T2911
113 W. 57th St., New York 19, N. Y.

Send me Commander Supporter for Free Trial. I will pay postman $2.98 plus postage. (Sizes 28 to 47.) If not satisfied I may return it in 10 days and get money back. (Sizes 48 to 60, $3.98.)

My Waist Measures.....My Height.....

Name .....

Address .....

If $2.98 is enclosed with order, we pay postage charges. ☐ Check here.

LAW...

STUDY AT HOME Legally trained men win higher positions and bigger success in business and public life. Greater opportunities now than ever before. More Ability: More Prestige: More Money We guide you step by step. You can train at home during spare time. Degree of LL.B. We furnish all text material, including 14-volume Law Library. Low cost, easy terms. Get our valuable 48-page "Law Training for Leadership" and "Evidence" books FREE. Send NOW.

LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY, 417 South Dearborn Street
A Correspondence Institution Dept. 11329-L Chicago 5, Ill.

Sterling Silver Saddle RING

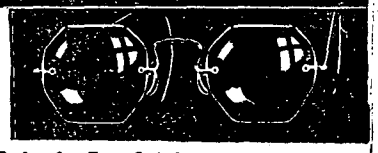
Authentic replica of championship rodeo saddle! Handsomely formed from solid Sterling Silver, by expert silver craftsmen. Men's, Women's, Children's styles.

SEND NO MONEY! Just clip ad and mail with name, address, ring style and size. Pay postman only $4.95 (includes tax) plus postage, wear 5 days. If not delighted, return for full refund.

Western Craftsmen 1904 Farnam Dept. 606-I Omaha 2, Nebr.

BUY FROM THE OLDEST ESTABLISHED FIRM IN THE UNITED STATES SELLING
EYE GLASSES BY MAIL

As Low As $1.95 For Satisfaction



Write Today for Free Catalog. Send No Money

ADVANCE SPECTACLE COMPANY
537 S. Dearborn St., Dept. T-11 Chicago, Ill.

FREE ENLARGEMENT of your Favorite Photo

FROM FAMOUS HOLLYWOOD FILM STUDIOS

Just to get acquainted we will make a beautiful 5 x 7 enlargement of any picture or negative. Be sure to include color of hair, eyes and clothing and get our bargain offer for having your enlargement beautifully hand colored in oil and mounted in your choice of handsome frames. Please enclose 10c and your original picture or negative will be returned with the free 5 x 7 enlargement postpaid. Act now! Limit 2 to a customer.

HOLLYWOOD FILM STUDIOS
7021 Santa Monica Blvd., Dept. 359, Hollywood, Calif.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHICH OF THESE *EXCITING* BOOKS DO YOU WANT?

ONLY 25¢ EACH

Now you can enjoy many hours of exciting reading pleasure at a small fraction of the original cost. The Popular Library reprints bring you word-for-word, page-for-page books of proved popularity in durable reprints. Take your choice of the titles listed below.

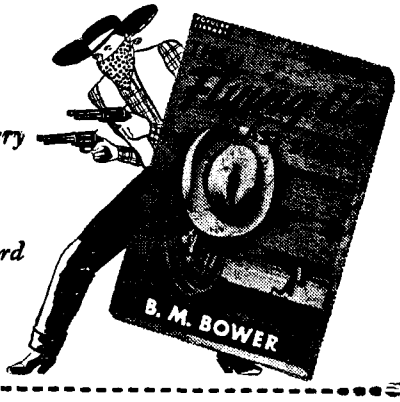
- **EVERY ONE A FULL-SIZED VOLUME!**
- **EVERY ONE A FAMOUS BEST SELLER!**
- **EVERY ONE ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AT $2 OR MORE PER COPY!**

POPULAR LIBRARY *Mysteries*

- 113 CRUCIBLE *by Ben Ames Williams*
- 111 BEDELIA *by Vera Caspary*
- 87 FATAL DESCENT *by John Rhode & Carter Dickson*
- 109 I'LL SING AT YOUR FUNERAL *by Hugh Pentecost*
- 108 THE YELLOW VIOLET *by Frances Crane*
- 98 DIVIDEND ON DEATH *by Brett Halliday*
- 97 A VARIETY OF WEAPONS *by Rufus King*

POPULAR LIBRARY *Westerns*

- 119 FIREBRAND *by Tom Gill*
- 103 THE PHANTOM CANOE *by William Byron Mowery*
- 114 RAMROD *by Luke Short*
- 118 THE FLYING U'S LAST STAND *by B. M. Bower*
- 104 MESQUITE JENKINS, TUMBLEWEED *by Clarence E. Mulford*
- 96 SINGING RIVER *by W. C. Tuttle*
- 95 THE RED LAW *by Jackson Gregory*



POPULAR LIBRARY *Specials*

- 102 DUEL IN THE SUN *by Niven Busch*
- 110 CONGO SONG *by Stuart Cloete*
- 94 THE MORTAL STORM *by Phyllis Bottome*
- 115 POPULAR BOOK OF CARTOONS
- 107 CROSSWORD PUZZLES
- 91 THE SEA-HAWK *by Rafael Sabatini*
- 101 LUMMOX *by Fannie Hurst*

ORDER BY NUMBER
MAIL COUPON TODAY!

POPULAR LIBRARY, INC., Dept. TFG-11
10 East 40th St., New York 16, N. Y.

Send me postpaid the Popular Library books I have circled. I enclose 25c (in coin or in U. S. stamps of small denominations) per copy (NOTE: We pay postage on orders for 4 books or more. If ordering less than 4 books, please enclose 5c per book extra for postage.)

87	95	98	103	108	111	115
91	96	101	104	109	113	118
94	97	102	107	110	114	119

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY & ZONE..... STATE.....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I TALKED WITH GOD"

. . . yes I did, actually and literally

Dr. Frank B. Robinson

As a result of that little talk with God, some twenty years ago, there came into my life a Power so staggering that at first I wondered about it: Then, when I realized that it was the Power of God, I discovered that the shackles which had bound me for over forty years went a-shimmering. There came into my life a Power the like of which I had never known. Up to that time I was perhaps the world's biggest failure.

NOW . . .? Well my every dream had come true. I am President of The News-Review Publishing Co. which publishes the largest circulating daily newspaper in this area. I live in a wonderful home which has a beautiful pipe-organ in it. My needs are all amply taken care of, and I drive a wonderful Cadillac.

YOU TOO CAN TALK WITH GOD, and when you do, if there is lack in your life, this same Power which came into mine can come into yours. Fear, distress, and all the other allied things pass out of the life when this staggering Power comes in. If you will fill in the coupon below, I'll send you free of all cost, information which may make you blink your eyes. It may sound unbelievable at first, but it's true—believe me. So fill out and mail the coupon . . . NOW. This is our 20th year of operations exclusively by mail, so you need have no fear. We are quite reliable, and are interested only in your finding the same Power Dr. Robinson found.

FREE **FREE**

Psychiana . . . . . **Dept. 32** . . . . . **Moscow, Idaho, U.S.A.**

Please send me absolutely free—details of how you discovered the Power of God in your life.

NAME.....

CITY.....

STREET AND NO.....STATE.....

Copyright 1946, Psychiana

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

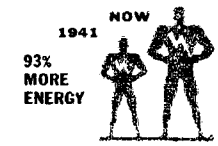
NEW EVEREADY
TRADE-MARK
FLASHLIGHT BATTERIES
*Now last 93% longer!**

Enough Energy to Hurl This Daring Miss Over 100 FEET!

Imagine!—the girl weighs 110 pounds! Yet the total energy in one tiny "Eveready" flashlight cell—properly expended—is equal to the charge that sends her flying up—up—over the gasping audience, to land over 100 feet away.

PACKED with new dynamic power . . . dazzling in performance . . . durable beyond any flashlight cells you've ever known, "Eveready" flashlight batteries give you the year's greatest energy value. That's a 93% *increase* over the great record made by pre-war "Eveready" cells . . . nearly double the life of light. Yet you pay no more.

High Energy
MEANS BRIGHTER LIGHT, LONGER LIFE



* To you, this means nearly *twice* the energy . . . almost *two times longer life* of bright white light. And it's yours for the pre-war price . . . *still only 10¢!*

The registered trade-mark "Eveready" distinguishes products of
NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY, INC.
30 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y.
Unit of Union Carbide UCC *and Carbon Corporation*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED